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星の光  
より速く!

Tatsunokotarou  
竜ノ湖太郎  
Illustration  
天之有

角川  
スニーカー  
文庫







NEKOMIMI  
HEADPHONES  
WORN ON  
IZAYOI'S HEAD  
PERFECTLY  
MATCHED HIM.

SAKAMAKI  
IZAYOI

W-WHY DID MY HEART SUDDENLY  
START BEATING SO HARD.....



KURO  
USAGI



口絵・本文イラスト／天之有

口絵・本文デザイン／百足屋ユウコ（ムシカゴグラフィックス）

## Interlude 1

In a corner of the summoned city of London, the three-headed dragon was sitting, coiling itself like a snake. The golden flames released by the Roc Demon King reduced the entire city to ashes, but this city here was an imitation created by a Host Master privilege. Since the city itself was a hint for clearing the game, it was set to automatically repair itself. No matter how many times it got destroyed, it should return to exactly how it was before.

The distinctly european stone roads and buildings were cold, they were robbing him of his body temperature through his white skin.

To a reptile this climate and environment is harsh, but to the three-headed dragon, whose blood was like lava, it was rather soothing.

"....."

While entwining his three heads and re-coiling itself, he started to sleep.

This is a digression, but —— Aži Dakāha's outward appearance closely resembled a dragon, but his spiritual power was closer to a spiritual existence such as a Divine Spirit or a Devil. In reality, he didn't have any need to sleep. Even if he did sleep sometimes in order to waste time, he didn't need to do it in order to satisfy a need.

Therefore the three-headed dragon was now sleeping for the former reason.

The type of Host Master privilege that summons a game board doesn't allow anyone to leave until the game is cleared. So until the time comes, the best choice is to sleep, he thought.

"....."

Twining his three heads he recounted the contents of the Games.

As a natural-born Demon Lord he doesn't like the relaxed type of Game solving. A Demon Lord should fight and trample everything with overwhelming power, that's how it shows its majesty.

Overpowering stalwart champions with force, seeing through petty strategies with vicious ingenuity, covering the hell that envelops the world with an even deeper hell. That is a Demon Lord.

However the Games this time are a little different.

The Games this time were designed to use his 'Demon Lords should behave like this' views against him. If he were to make a move first, penalties would be inevitable. It's unknown what poet wrote songs about it, but they managed to analyze it annoyingly well. Carelessly making a move would be playing right into the hands of the Host side. Twisting his three heads, Aži Dakāha was looking at a different Geass Roll with each of his heads.

### **- Gift Game Name: Jack the Monster -**

#### Participating Requirements

The target has killed, hurt, or performed evil deeds against a child

#### Winning Conditions

First: The defeat of the Host, Pumpkin The Clown

Second: Unravel the history and solve the mystery of 'Jack'

#### Defeat Conditions

First: Player is defeated when the Player is killed by the Game Master

Second: Whenever a part of the Game Master's identity is exposed he loses strength, which ultimately leads to his defeat.

Oath: The legality of this Game is assured as long as it is carried out on a participant who has fulfilled the Participating Requirements.

'St. Peter' Seal

**- Gift Game: GREEK MYTHS of GRIFFIN -**

Participating Requirements

-The target has to be an invader (The definition of an invader will follow the conditions that were created in the contract)

Winning Conditions

First: Defeat the Protector of the Treasure from the Host side.

Second: Discover the location of the treasure and display your courage.

Defeat conditions

First: Destruction of the Treasure (In case the Host destroys the treasure on purpose, it means Victory for the Participant side).

Second: When everyone on the Participant side is defeated, and is unable to fight.

Penalty Clause

First: Participants attacking the Host side outside of the Place of the Treasure is forbidden.

Second: If the Participant side breaks the rules, the Host side is allowed to seal one of the Gifts possessed by the Participants.

Third: If the Participant side breaks the rules three times, they will be restrained indefinitely.

Fourth: These Penalties will be rescinded when a Winning Condition is fulfilled.

### Rewards for winning

First: The Participant is allowed to request any sort of reward from the Host (as long as it is within the boundaries of their spiritual power to give).

Second: The Host is allowed to prosecute the Participant as an invader.

Oath: The legality of this Game is assured as long as it is carried out on a participant who has fulfilled the Participating Requirements.

### The Temporary Representative of the Greek Gods, 'Kerykeion' Seal

#### **- Gift Game: GROUND COVER on the MOON SEE -**

I have twenty-eight brothers who are very shy.

They show themselves when the veil of the night descends.

Brothers with the same face despise, curse and claw at each other.

They shake the surface of the sea with their snarling, and with the breaking of dawn they disappear.

Two disappearing means the sinking of the sands.

Four disappearing means the devouring of stones.

Six disappearing means the consumption of rocks.

Eight disappearing means the burying of the earth.

Ten disappearing means the withering of forests.

Twelve disappearing means the covering of the mountains and rivers.

When fourteen disappears the only ones left in heaven and earth are only us.

Grieving the heavens and earth we open the Heavenly Rock Door, and invite new brothers in.

Inviting two creates mountains and rivers.

Inviting four enriches the forests.

Inviting six yields earth.

Inviting eight piles up rocks.

Inviting ten stacks stones.

Inviting twelve pours sand.

When we invite fourteen, my brothers once again curse and snarl at each other.

Till we truly separate heaven and earth dawn will not come again.

Pierce through our formless selves and break the cycle of reincarnation.

'The One Who Envelops the Seas' Seal

A Triple Game created by using three Host Master privileges at the same time.

One of the current Games - the Game held by Sala Doltrake, using the Gift bestowed upon the Gryphon by the Greek Gods as the motif, limited the actions he could take.

The gryphon, called the King of Beasts, has the aspects of a lion and the King of Birds, the eagle, who pulled the chariot of Zeus, King of the Greek Gods, was entrusted with the role of guarding gold, qualifying as a Divine Beast.

Throughout the annals of human history it was used many times as a motif in national flags and family crests, its divinity was higher than an average Divine Spirit. However after coming to Little Garden, their numbers increased, and with that their divinity was distributed, currently leaving each individual with the power of a mid-level Mythical Beast at most.

Created for the purpose of gathering all the divinity in an individual was the Dragon Horn of the Gryphon.

Beasts that possessed a horn were regarded as sacred in every part of the world, and were viewed as the symbol of strength.

The Gift that empowered their individual divinity and the divinity they received from the Greek Gods, that is the true identity of Draco Greif's Horns of Dragon and Eagle. A gryphon in possession of both the horns gains a spiritual power equivalent to wielding the Thunderbolt of Zeus, the activation of a Host Master privilege should be trivial at that point.

*(If the Game was constructed based upon Zeus's Gift, then the most famous one of the Gryphon legends was the pulling of the chariot, or perhaps the guarding of gold. Taking the 'Treasure' keyword written in the winning conditions into consideration, it should be fine to assume the latter was used here.)*

The 'Treasure' in the winning conditions probably symbolizes the gold. The next one to think about is what 'invader' means, but with all this information the question is already practically answered.

In Greek Mythology the ones who were aiming for the Gryphon's gold were mostly identified as Giants.

And by comparing the western european mythologies with human history, the Giants were in most cases savage tribes or foreigners. This Game was originally constructed as anti-giant Game, but underwent a Game Remake by expanding the interpretation.

*(There should be a poet named Aesop in greek mythology. A Game Remake of this degree should be no problem for him.)*

After analyzing the Game this far, the answer is clear.

By interpreting the 'Treasure' as 'Gold', the identity of the 'Treasure' that needs to be obtained could only be one thing.

*(The Demon Lord ruling over the boundary between Gold and the Stars, Queen Halloween. Assuming that her Flag is the Treasure is the most logical.)*

In that case it's real simple.

The hiding place of the Treasure is none other than the enemy stronghold, the airborne citadel.

The Host was boldly flying the golden flag. Then as Demon Lord, brazenly raiding the enemy camp and blowing away their pride is the most majestic course of action.

But Aži Dakāha just coiled himself once again and narrowed his ruby eyes.

*(But if they did a Game Remake, they probably wouldn't leave contents of the anti-giant version. Should it be viewed as a mislead, or they just couldn't change it for some reason? This Game's purpose is probably simply to stall for time, but even then this is too easy.)*

The basis for thinking that is not just intuition.

Draco Greif also participated in the battle against Aži Dakāha 200 years ago. However, he only had one horn and showed no signs of activating a Host Master privilege.

*(If this isn't just a gamble, then are two points that need further consideration.)*

First. The possibility that one of the Horns of the Gryphon is already lost and it can't exhibit its original power.

Second. The fact that even with this being the case, they managed to hold the Game of the Gryphon.

*(That means the backer of this game is not Zeus, but a different faction..... Maybe Kerykeion, who was the one to put their Seal of Approval, should be viewed as the Game's main focus.)*

—The Temporary Representative of the Greek Gods, Kerykeion. One belonging to the group of gods called the Twelve Pillars of Olympus, the God of Commerce, Hermes was the one that ruled that Community.

He is a Divine Spirit that, as the God of Couriers that connect cities, walked along every major roads in the world, from ancient times to modern times he was recorded in human history in many different forms.

Spreading its Flag from western europe to even a place called far east, Kerykeion was a huge Community that was considered highly important among the Greek Gods.

And what is even more important is the model that was used for their Flag.

It was a snake coiled around a staff, a Golden Divine Staff as it was described in folklore.

*(Divine Staff, Kerykeion as the backer. The Legend of the Gryphon. The Treasure mentioned in the winning conditions. And the stage set in London in*

*the year around 1890. Putting all these together there is something that starts to appear.)*

There was two incorrect answers that came with penalties in this Game.

Then one ... nay, two will be fine.

Thinking that, the three-headed dragon cut the tip of his clawed fingers and let his blood drop, and with that he summoned his heralds.

In an instant the stone pavement made of bricks started pulsating and throbbing like a living being.

*"Need information. Search the city. Kill those that try to interfere."*

*Dokun*, the bricks pulsated. That must have been the answer.

The heralds left while making a scraping sound on the bricks without showing themselves. After this exploration is done with, there is no need to carefully prepare. When the preparations for the raid of the enemy base are done, all that's left is carrying the raid out.

Until then he thought of taking a nap, but just when he closed his eyes —— *katsun*, a high-pitched footstep resounded.

"".....!"

*yurari*, one of his three heads was raised in a sickle shape.

Then, from the other side of the deteriorated street, two sets of footsteps were audible. At first he thought it was an action of the Host side, but it was too early and too careless for that.

Tilting his left head, he pondered what could it be.

When the owner of the footsteps showed itself, it started shouting in a cheerful voice.

"Ah, there he is, Master!"

"Yes, I can see that. Settle down a bit, Carla. You are standing before His Excellency."

A cheerful girl with gorgeous blond hair dressed as a maid, her sweet looking hair gently fluttering, pointed her finger at the three-headed dragon with an almost humming tone.

Her strawberry red lips further enhanced her attractive and charming appearance. However, contrary to her appearance and maid clothes, from her waist an enormous greatsword was hanging. There was no way the greatsword, that was about as long as tall she was, could be swung even once with the thin arms of a woman.

Yet the blond maid —— the girl called Carla, not caring about the weight of the greatsword, was doing a little dance. Not an average superhuman strength. Can't even be mistaken for a human.

(....*a pure-blood vampire, huh?*)

The famous Knight of Little Garden, a pure-blood vampire.

Their clan was destroyed by internal strife within their Community even before the Dystopia War. They were once the protector of peace, but with the internal strife their numbers greatly decreased, so it's said that the remaining members live in hidden villages, and rarely show themselves.

There was one in the battle yesterday, but this one is a different type.

In contrast to her beautiful appearance and cheerful behavior, in her gaze a dark, devilish light was shining. That glint in her eyes, rather than a knight's, it was fitting for a witch. The true nature of this woman was undoubtedly a devilish creature. Rather than a knight's, her ambiance was closer to the image that humanity has about vampires.

But the three-headed dragon was vigilant towards not the beautiful vampire, but towards the other man.

"\_\_\_\_"

He narrowed his six ruby eyes with distrust.

The appearance of the man called as Master was somewhat hard to describe.

His attire couldn't be described with 'from where', 'what', and 'why'.

Its place of origin, its manufacturing method, or even its purpose couldn't be ascertained. This wasn't a Gift like the Helm of Hades that renders its user invisible. The man in front of him, he himself had an exceedingly thin existence.

After a slight bow, the mysterious man greeted him like he was an old acquaintance.

"It's been a while, Your Excellency. It's good to see you in good health as always."

".....*that voice. The Poet of Grimm?*"

"Indeed. When Grim Grimoire collapsed I lost my spiritual power you see. Well, as you can tell."

"*Nonsense. As if a No-former who lost all its spiritual power could still be alive.*"

"That's not really true. There are backdoors and exceptions to everything. I'm being employed as a Storyteller right now — ah, we should be talking about you right now instead of this. You sure are taking your time with the game solving. Your old self would have raided the enemy camp knowing full well that it's a trap and would've murdered everyone despite the trap anyway."

The mysterious man shook his head sideways to express his disappointment — The man known as Grimm defenselessly approached the three-headed dragon and narrowed his eyes with criticism.

"Your Excellency is not the type to adopt a wait-and-see approach just because of a short 200 years nap. You have something in mind, right? I won't interfere so tell this old friend about it."

"....."

*Hyun*, a sound of cutting the air.

In the background the city of London was engulfed in strong gale. One of the wings of the three-headed dragon appeared to have been spread wide, aimed to cut off the head of the man like a sharp blade.

But the man known as Grimm only shook like video noise with his head and body still connected like nothing happened.

Shrugging his shoulders the laughing man showed a snake like coiling smile and said.

"It's no use, Your Excellency. You can't kill me right now with a childish trick like that. With Your Excellency's Avesta there might be a slight possibility, but .... care to take a chance?"

"....."

The man known as Grimm was provoking him with a wide smile. However the three-headed dragon didn't respond and coiled around himself once again, trying to go back to sleep. It seems he got mixed up with a bothersome fellow.

Waving the end of his tail around, he said with an emotionless tone.

*"Scram, the Poet of Grimm. I have no interest in you today."*

"That's cold, man~. Don't just shoot down your zealous fan? Should I help with the mystery solving if you're in a tight spot?"

*"Don't need. The mystery is mostly solved."*

....*hohh*? The man, Grimm, grinned with the edges of his mouth curving upwards. That smile looked just like a snake's with its prey right in front of it. Even without seeing the exact shape of his face, there is no hiding the malice oozing out from this man. This not the malice of a devil or the menacing malice of a Demon Lord.

Indulging in vices in the world of man.

Toying with grief in Hell.

Taking the hand of the God of Death on the battlefield and dancing on the precipice.

Even with housing such malicious intent that truly deserves to be called malevolence, this man's smile had a charm that prevented one from looking away.

"Is that so? As one would expect from Your Excellency. As a fan I feel relieved. Me and my maid will act as a spectator, so Your Excellency should enjoy the fight with your kind."

"...*my kind*?"

Due to the unexpected words, he asked back with those same words. He knew that he shouldn't take anything this kind of person says at face value, but he couldn't help but ask back.

The 'same kind' this man said did not refer to the Demon Lord qualification. He said 'same kind' while referring to the essence of the three-headed dragon at his core.

The man known as Grimm, enjoying that reaction, he held his laughter and answered.

"Yeah, that's right. In this Triple Game, there is a single one of Your Excellency's kind. One with the same trial as you, the Demon Lord carrying the flag of 'Evil', Aži Dakāha."

"....."

"I wonder how you will respond with your mirror image in front of you. What kind of tyranny will you display. ....I'm waiting for that moment so much. As a Demon Lord who fought for years as a Last Embryo, what kind of judgement will you deal on your kind?"

Grimm laughed obscenely.

That smile had an eeriness to it, like he already predicted how the battle will end.

"If there is someone that can defeat His Excellency in this battle, will it be that man, or the daughter of Koumei..... or maybe the most likely candidate, Canaria's pawn that will win? Carla, what do you think?"

"Well, let's see. As a dark horse, how about His Highness-kun, as the representative of Ouroboros?"

"Nah, no way. That kid is 10 years too early to confront His Excellency. He is missing that essential hero-ness."

It was denied immediately by the man known as Grimm.

'That's true', the two of them giggled as they turned their back on the three-headed dragon.

"Well, that's all I wanted to say. It seems the top management is already flying the white flag and given up. So whether your win or lose, this Game will be the last for Your Excellency. I've only came to advise you of that.

—— So don't leave any regrets. To me you are the only true Demon Lord in this world."

The man known as Grimm and the vampire left only those words and disappeared like mist.

What remained was the dry wind, blowing through the empty London.

The three-headed dragon narrowed his six ruby eyes, and turned his three heads towards the sky.

"....*I see. This is my final battle.*"

The far past was reflected in the ruby eyes of the three-headed dragon.

Last Embryo —— Before he was called that, Aži Dakāha was much different than the current Divine Spirit with monstrous appearance.

The legend and warning about Aži Dakāha that was recorded in Zoroastrianism is surprisingly simple.

Some country's king lost himself in his greed, hatred, and ill will, and in the end he turned into an evil draconic monster and became a being bent on destroying the world. Even small children know this tale.

It was a cautionary tale about how people in power that are swayed by evil intentions could end up.

There is no limit to human karma. Their brutality can't be compared to even a devil. Especially when bad karma of a person in power gathers without end, it could easily destroy a country, a race of people, or even stars.

The more power that gathers to stop those deeds, the Demon Lord, Aži Dakāha becomes that much more sinister.

Scales grew on his human skin, the tip of his finger sharpened into claws, his jaw opened up so much he could devour the earth, his skull split into three and each part turned into a vicious dragon.

There was no trace of his human self left in the current three-headed dragon.

So sinister it makes strong warriors sick in their stomach.

So foul that innocent nuns would scream in terror.

The number of curses and abuses that fell upon him easily exceeded the number of stars, and with each, his monstrosity increased further.

His thoroughly distorted appearance was fitting for the name of evil god by anyone's definition.

—— "Thou shalt be evil."

In other words rewarding good and punishing evil.

Not single bit of justice is needed for the enemy that needs to be defeated. Evil should be repulsive and foul. That wish is the basis of this appearance. So, according to the wish of the people he kept exerting his tyranny.

He fought, he fought, he kept fighting.

He fought for thousands of years, waiting for the 'hero that will someday appear'. There were strong warriors that managed to seal him, but he never met a hero that could defeat him.

He kept fighting battles like that not knowing when they would end. The moment he thought that those seemingly endless day would come to a close —— the shadow of a single woman reflected in his ruby eyes.

"....."

His six eyes were gazing at the starry sky.

Thinking back, everything started with the tears of that woman.

That woman was born unrelated to Zoroastrianism, she was born in Little Garden as a being that shouldered a fragment of the world.

Light and darkness, yin and yang, good and evil, creation and termination, man and woman.

Due to a part of the Paradox Game, Omnipotent Paradox, the gods of Little Garden are forbidden from creating a cosmology that is based on monism or monotheism. That is the reason why the biggest sect that existed in the 2000s era can't exercise its power in Little Garden.

On the other hand, Zoroastrianism, that is based on the duality of good and evil, is the one that filled the requirement for creating a cosmology the earliest by having the least common multiple, and with that monopolised one of the biggest Paradigm Shift.

That woman, who was born to fill the role of least common multiple of the cosmos, had a name and the position of a Divine Spirit that was burdened with every kind of misery at the dawn of the world forced upon her.

Destined to fight for thousands, ten-thousands, hundreds of millions of years, that woman always wept, not being able to bear her fate. She cried while she fought. Piercing through the hearts of heroes that challenged her, she always wept, covering her face with blood drenched hands.

.....at the time, the three-headed dragon, who was born for battle, couldn't understand the reason she, his Creator, wept. In the first place, if she didn't want to fight all she had to do was stop fighting. She had the power to do that, something like running away, deserting from battle should have been easy. But she said she didn't hate fighting.

Then is she sad because she killed the enemy, he asked, but she shook her head weeping.

Is it because she is the enemy of every being in the world, he asked, but she shook her head once again.

Then why are you sad?, he irritatedly asked —— she then quietly answered.

"....."

He closed his ruby eyes. Even after countless years there was no way he could forget.

The reason for the tears that endlessly poured from those gem-like eyes.

If he could wipe those tears away, he strongly felt he wouldn't mind risking an eternity.

He fought, he fought, he fought for a time close to eternity.

That battle..... is finally almost over.

""—*It's the time of Judgment. Heroes of Little Garden. Now is the time to show your true worth....!!!*"

## **Chapter 1**

### **Part1**

---Airborne Citadel. War Strategizing Assembly.

“I see that all of the pieces (of puzzle) have assembled. Well then, let’s start the final investigation.”

Declaring the start to their meeting, Baron Croix tapped the ground with his Maple leaf staff.

Because the individuals seated around this round table were some of the famous and strong individuals from the vast world of Little Garden.

From the East’s 「Floor Master」 , “Great Sage of Maelstroms (The one who devastates seas)”, Kouryuu.

From the South’s 「Floor Master」 , Sala Doltrake.

From the North’s 「Floor Master」 , the Commander Lapko III.

And there were those who rushed over to help like “Great Sage of Chaos (The one who leaves Heaven in disarray)” — Roc Demon King and the Queen’s knight—Faceless.

Currently, Jack, who had been part of the main force, is now in the emergency ward after the retreat from the frontlines. It really is a pity for Jack and Willa who were powerful players to be unable to attend this meeting, but that is something that could not be helped in any case.

Sakamaki Izayoi took another sip at the tonic prepared for him before raising his question.

“Although you call this an investigation, Azi Dahaka isn’t a Demon Lord who uses a 「Host Master」 authority. I feel that we will not be able to see a chance for victory even if we were to investigate into Azi Dahaka’s mythological roots.”

“Well, who knows?”

Waving his bowler hat, Croix shot his gaze towards Kouryuu.

Kouryuu, who received the gaze, then folded his arms across his chest with a troubled look.

“Hey, lad, actually we did have a bout with him after that but the result was us getting a thrashing. He’s protected by a Gift or spell that is unknown to us and we are out of tricks to play against him. After all, even Karyou-chan’s fire that possess the power to even harm gods and dragons alike seem to be ineffective.”

“Second brother, please do not call me Karyou-chan.”

Roc Demon King pouted as she made her protest.

Izayoi seemed to be deep in thought as he nodded his head and asked Faceless who sat beside him.

“..... I see. Then, what are your thoughts on this, Faceless-sama?”

“I would also agree with Croix and Kouryuu-dono. Since even her--- Karyou-chan’s flames were ineffective,”

“Wait a moment, Queen’s knight. Who gave you the right to call my name,”

“Oh so it’s like that. Then, what’s your opinion on this, Karyou-chan?”

“As I’ve said, don’t call me “Karyou-chan” Aah!!! Do you want me to blast you fools away into the skies?!!”

Roc Demon King was so furious that her veins were bulging at her temples.

\*Klak Klack\* came the sound of the staff that was being tapped on the ground to call back the attention of everyone as Croix gave a bitter smile before diving back into the discussions.

“I agree with what you said as well. I also feel that Karyou-chan.....  
KehoKeho, it’s my bad. I’m just joking, so please don’t burn me for real.”

Karyou-chan, whose right arm was wreathed in the Flames of the Golden Wing, successfully pulled back everyone to the main topic.

“.....Hm. It is said that you battled that three-headed dragon 200 years ago right? Then you should know of some of its vulnerabilities and such, right, Shinigami?”

All eyes turned to look at Croix then.

200 years ago--- The people who sealed Azi Dahaka, who had wiped out the 「Aristocrats of Little Garden」 were no other than the previous 「No Name」 . And being the one of the founders of that Community, it is impossible for Croix to be in the dark about the matters concerning the three headed dragon.

Pressing his bowler hat, Croix gave a shrug of his shoulders, “Hmph. It’s just as everyone thinks it is. I’ve already investigated the matter on the ineffectiveness of Roc Demon King’s Gift on him.”

“Then,”

“But, these are two different matters. Since we are to battle against Azi Dahaka, then we would have to discuss a question on a much more fundamental level---“What is Azi Dahaka, the Last Trial of Humanity (Last Embryo)?”. He’s not an enemy that we can beat with just an analysis on his displayed strength. A battle likened to a fluid matter that changes with the time. It is never too much to be well prepared for a battle.”

“Right. No matter what the case might be, we will need the time to regather our troops and to use our time efficiently.”

Hearing Kouryuu’s words, everyone nodded their heads, regardless of the different expressions they had on their faces.

After understanding their situation, Izayoi then propped his chin with a hand and directed a question to Croix.

“Then, let me take this chance to ask something. Oi, Shinigami.”

“What?”

“That fellow whom we have fought against before who’s called 「End Emptiness」, is he one of the Final Trials of Humanity as well?”

Simply asking with a simple intention of confirming something, Izayoi had uttered that question nonchalantly. However, those who had heard those words from Izayoi’s mouth were staring at him with their eyes widened in surprise.

Kouryuu then, had also widened those narrow slit eyes of his to the widest as he asked.

“Izayoi-kun..... you, have fought against it?!”

“Well, it’s not so much as a battle. It was more on the level of exchanging a greeting.”

“Then, that’s also something impressive in itself. 「End Emptiness」 is one of the few beings that is clearly known to hold a place in the single digits. To be able to live to tell the tale is very much an accomplishment in itself.”

Even Faceless, who was usually calm and reserved, was nodding her head furiously.

However, Izayoi was taken aback by her words.

“A single digit.....huh? It can be understood as one of the top existences in the world of Little Garden right, masked knight-sama?”

“Of course. Although it is out of simplicity that we categorised it within the ranks of the Demon Lords, 「End Emptiness」 is actually part of the rules

that govern the world---and it can actually be seen as an existence that is “partially omnipotent”.”

That, was something which Izayoi had heard from Garol a while back.

It was said that the entity had entered the present time flow from the furthest ends of the concept of time, but that description had been too abstract and it only left a hazy memory within Izayoi. Actually, if it is said to origin from the very end of the concept of time, it would already be a trial that far exceeds the human capability to overcome on their own.

It is not known if Croix understood what was going through Izayoi’s mind at the moment as he gave a bitter laugh while replying.

“It is just as the Queen’s Knight describes it to be. 「End Emptiness」 is quite unique. The reason for it to be positioned amongst the 「Last Embryo」s would be possession of a time limit similar to the other Last Trials. And its disappearance for the last two hundred years could be taken as a result of Azi Dahaka’s sealing that froze time for it as well.”

“Then, if the time limit is up before we are able to clear the game.....?”

“Needless to say, the entire world of Little Garden would be blown away by 「End Emptiness」 .

Hearing those words, Sala and the other 「Floor Master」 s' faces had tightened up in seriousness.

“.....Croix-sama. Are we to assume that the Heavenly Armies are not coming anymore?”

“I guess they are not coming anymore. After all, they do have a time limit for their mobilization..... and this would mean that they are already moving to carry out the measures in case of the worst case scenario and do not have the time to send any reinforcements to us.”

Upon the mention of the Heavenly armies, Roc Demon King and Kouryuu turned their sharp gazes towards Croix.

“That's hard to say actually. The one in control of the Heavenly Armies are the twelve Adityas<sup>[1]</sup>..... which also mean it's under Indra right? I don't believe that the useless god known by the Heavenly realm to be “only doing unnecessary things” would be able to give this much thought at all.”

“ShiroYoruOu said that Indra’s like the “Big Brother who sets a bad example in the Heavenly Realm”. He’s also often described as a god who acts promptly even though matters at hand are not yet fully understood by himself.....”

“Mhm. About that, I wouldn’t deny as well. .....But bad rumours are bound to attract attention at all times. As a comrade in arms against 「The Locked Away World (Dystopia)」 , I believe that he’s an irreplaceable friend and a brave warrior.”

It was undeniable that his expression softened in his recollection of memories, but those eyes did not carry any merriment.

It was plainly a warning to drop all slander against a comrade who once fought under the same flag as himself.

And with regards to the two, who were defeated by the twelve Adityas before, the urge to sprout their retorts had rose to their throats, but they too realised that it was not the time to discuss private grudges at the meeting and could only swallow them back for the moment.

Izayoi gave a sigh as he added his comment to the same topic.

“Mah, I heard that he did help to bestow Divinity to Kuro Usagi after all. So, it shouldn’t be possible for him to not know about the situation here. Or it might be that that act is the most he can do for us at the moment. Anyways, we can only depend on our own forces here to defeat that three headed lizard.”

“Yes, that seems to be the case. Although we did veer off topic for a little--- can we restart the final investigations?”

Croix asked the question again and no one seemed to have any differing opinion from resuming the discussion.

Although it was thus declared to be restarted, it was still not known to any of them on where to start the investigations.

And after a period of silence, Izayoi raised his hand while seemingly to be in a slight daze.

“Concerning this matter, Shinigami. May I ask the full details on the “time limit” that you talked about just now?”

“If I answer that question, wouldn’t it spoil the essence of the game? You are still young, so learn how to use that flexible brain of yours to think a little.”

Croix touched his bowler hat as he laughed. Not forgetting good fun even at these times, it could be said to be the flaw and his good point as a benevolent god. And it would seem that his baiting was with of some sort of hidden agenda.

However the person in question, Izayoi, did not return the smile. The usual him would have added that with two other lines of sarcasm as retorts. Yet, he was in an unusual state of seriousness as he continued to question.

“.....Hmph. Taking a close analysis on the three 「Last Trials of Humanity」 , it is possible to see the commonalities to the theories that are attributed to them. That is something that you are trying to alert me to right, Shinigami?”

Izayoi looked accusingly at Croix as he returned a conspiratorial grin then.

Beside him, Kouryuu, had an expression of surprise as he turned to ask Izayoi.

“What’s the matter, Izayoi-kun.”

“Well, it’s nothing. Just that up till today, I’ve met so many Demon Lords and Gods of various mythologies but when this fellow is back in the world of Little Garden that my suspicions finally clicked together. That this world of Little Garden is actually--- a world that exists in an interdependent relationship with the timeline of Human history.”

“Wait, that’s not really right actually. To put it more precisely, it should be that the gods are interdependent on the history of the human race. Mah, about ninety percent of the residents in Little Garden are bestowed with Gifts from the Gods, so it can be said in that way too.”

Most of the people present in the room were looking at each other and tilting their heads in query.

Among them, only the Queen’s knight, Faceless, understood the content of their conversation.

“I’ve heard my Queen saying that the Gods are involved in some long lasting paradox game..... and it is what they call the logical error.”

“What does that mean?”

“Please consider the conditions for which a divine spirit is able to exist in.

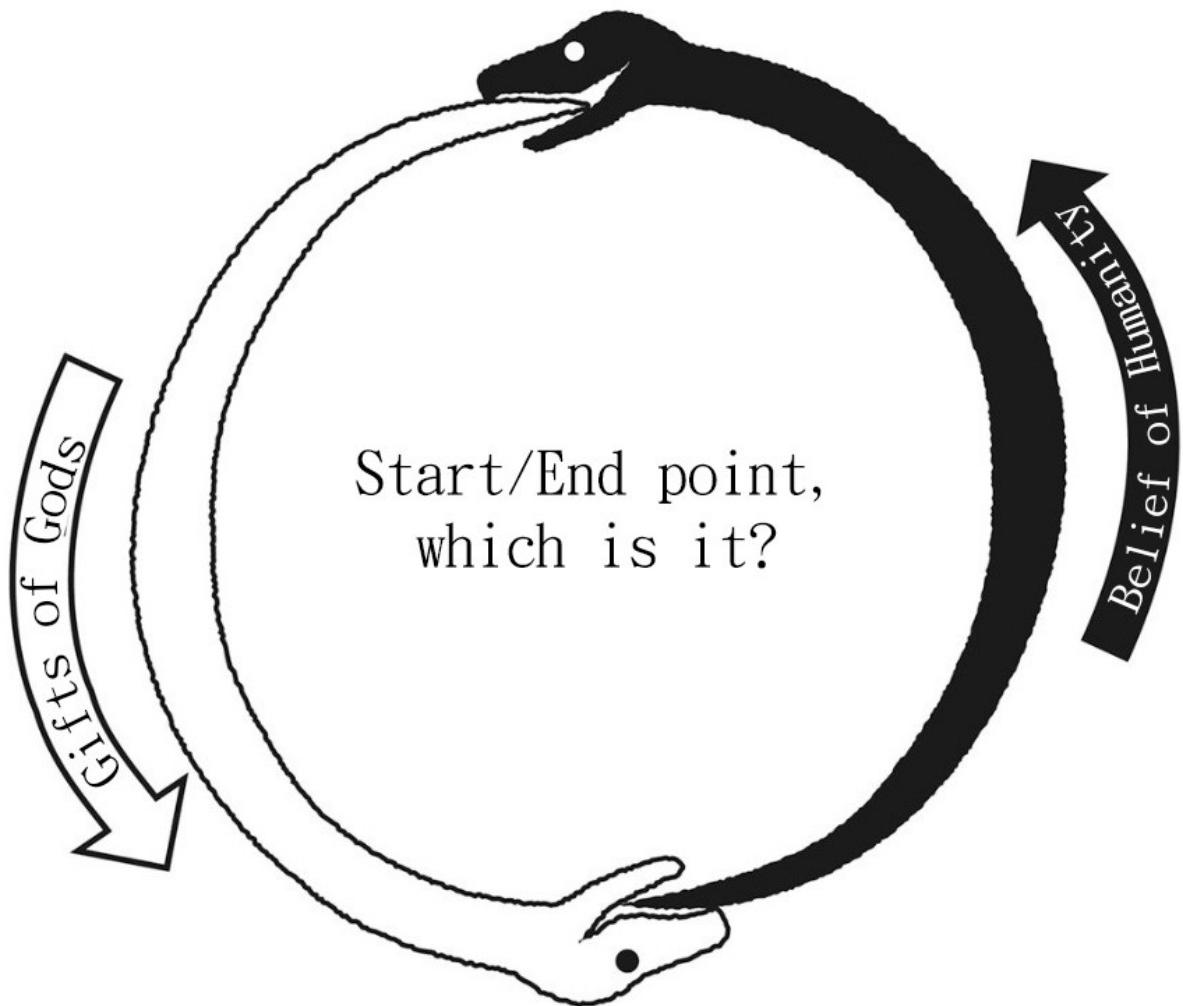
{Divine spirits happen due to the beliefs of the human race.}

{Humans evolve as they are bestowed the Gifts of the Gods.}

---Then, which of the two would be the start or the end point of the cycle?”

# GODS

(Birth)



(Evolution)

# HUMANS

Upon hearing the words from the Queen's knight, Sala's expression became hard and the two from the seven sages had also covered their mouths as they came upon some sort of realisation.

"The origin (alpha) of the creator and the end (omega) of the created

world..... that is the world of Little Garden?"

"That's right. From the history of Little Garden, it is also known to be the biggest mysterious paradox. Was it the egg first or was it the chicken first--- This is known to us as the 「Bootstrap Paradox」."

"That's not possible. Regarding that matter, didn't the human realm obtain the conclusion to that already? The most supported theory of cosmology in the 2000s is said to be the world view of gods having created the world isn't it?"

This conclusion would be affected greatly and vary slightly according to the strong religious sects of their time, but besides the proposed theory of the world being constructed in an instant as seen in the theory of creationism, other theories have yet to be proven true as well. And it was one of the truths that wasted much of the history of the human race in researching but have yet to be reached.

Regarding Roc Demon King's retort, Croix was slightly troubled as he gave a shrug.

"Karyou-chan. If "obtaining the support of humans" is the "insurance of the creationism theory"--- wouldn't that be equivalent to a "world that has its creation laws decided solely on the whims of the human race", and that would then imply that the humans themselves are the truth of the cosmology?"

"---That's,"

"And this is the truth behind the 「Last Trial of Humanity」 who was elevated to become the strongest god killer.---Of which speaking to this point, Izayoi-kun, you should have noticed something right?"

Thus, all their gazes were focused on Izayoi. Although some of them did notice that he was uncomfortable with his conclusion but noting that Croix, who hosted the meeting, probably singled him for a reason then determined their decision to listen quietly.

Izayoi folded his arms over his chest as he said the answer with a serious expression.

“.....Humans and gods are mutual observers. And that is to say, in the occasion that one side were to be wiped out, this relationship would be torn. It would then mean that the truth behind the 「Last Trial of Humanity」 would be ---“

--- 「Factor α which will destroy the human race」 .

This was the last trial given to humanity.

Hearing the demystification of the problem from Izayoi, Croix gave an evil grin and nodded his head.

“That’s right. In the Nordic lands, it is Ragnarok, in India, it is Kali Yuga. Ever since the ancient civilizations from long ago, the end point (Omega) X has always been the alarm that had continuously been rung for the gods to take note of. And that is also the name that the gods have given to it. The end of the world--- or, “eschatology”.”

That would be the real face behind those who were called the Last Trials of Humanity. The truth of the “time limit” was then the cause for Izayoi’s expression that took on an unprecedented look of seriousness.

*(Then, as I thought, the Last Trial’s time limit is the remaining time left till the Outer world’s humanity is to be destroyed. If this is true.....!)*

It was a bad premonition and there seemed to be a certainty to the omen.

Although it was clearly easy enough to ask Croix to confirm his thoughts, Izayoi’s own essence was what rendered him unable to speak those words. The possibility of the impending destruction might not be in this world of Little Garden---- but the world that he had forsaken.

## **Part 2**

---Kouen City. The neighboring forest.

Dawn was approaching and a radiance that did not originate from sunlight had enveloped a hilltop that was not far away from Kouen City.

After the summoning of the angels, Demon Lord Maxwell was cloaked in pale white spheres of light that clung to his body. However, there was no sign

of him being the least bit interested in making a move. Although it was difficult to determine his appearance from the exterior, the spiritual pressure exerted from the spherical objects were evidence of his presence. And with the passing of time, the number of summoned angels was increasing. The suspicious looking angeloid armored monsters were already numbering close to a dozen and were surrounding the throne of Maxwell.

「.....」

Noting the situation above, His Highness closed his eyes quietly for a moment.

A defeated angel's carcass was lying at the side of his feet. It was a completely empty suit of armor that did not have any presence of life in it when he inspected his defeated foe. And although it is still unconfirmed about the mechanisms behind its ability to move, it is understood that it isn't a living thing at the very least.

*(It seemed to be made of a metal that is as flexible as the sacred treasure metal, but that doesn't seem to be the case as well. Moreover, there's basically no presence of a spiritual power to be felt by my senses.)*

He had speculated initially that there would be some sort of mechanism within the angeloid automatic doll, but that conjecture had been revoked by his findings. And since it wasn't powered by a spiritual energy of sorts, could that possibly mean that the angeloid shell model provides a certain type of force in itself?

*(Could it be that this angeloid.....this shell itself, is the third.....?)*

Rin who was at the foot of the tree spoke to His Highness who was sorting out the stuff in his mind, "Your Highness. Grai-Oji-chan is coming back soon, let's retreat to meet up with him before returning to battle."

Coming back to the present, His Highness stepped off from the tree to land on the ground and noticed the lad in long robes who sat by the campfire,  
----Jin Russel.

"Thanks for your hard work. What's the situation like right now, is it still the same?"

His Highness replied while inching closer to the campfire where he sat himself down

“No, it’s worsening by the second. The number of angeloid creatures are continuing to multiply. And although those things are only capable of simple movements, their strength and ability to jump between dimensions is a shocking threat. Allowing them to continue multiplying will be bad news. Rin, is there any strategy to counter that?”

Being the Game maker in the team led by His Highness, Rin is responsible for the analysis and strategizing of plans. Although, the final decision to be carried out will still lie with High Highness.

However, the Rin who would usually start telling of her strategy with an easy going smile, was being hesitant about her words at the present.

“..... No matter what we decide to do, I would suggest that we do it sooner. After all, the angeloid creatures might multiply infinitely and that might make the threat of Maxwell comparable to even Azi Dahaka.”

“Then, let’s ...”

“No not now. Wait for Grai-Oji to come back before deciding on our direction of plans. The enemy is really too strong. We should not make a

move when we are not in our full numbers.” Rin asserted in a tone that was completely unlike a child. And that is the real her.

Her childish behaviors were an act when she could maintain her calm.

However, there’s probably no time for her to maintain her act with her current anxiety.

Even Jin, who was hugging his knees at the side, was anxious about the current situation.

*(That petal insignia emblazoned on the chestplate of the angeloid creature..... seems very familiar earlier, but I’m sure of it now. That’s the same insignia of the Flag of that automatic doll that Izayoi-san and the others had met in 「Underwood」 ..... the Community of Coppelia.)*

The 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」 - Coppelia.

She had previously been sealed by the Demon Lord 「End Emptiness」 , but having been involved with a certain matter with Izayoi and the others, the seal was temporarily removed. If defeating Maxwell meant that the spiritual power is returned to the original wielder, that would mean the returning of power to Coppelia.

Moreover, Rin and the others did not seem to have noticed the unsealing of Coppelia at the present.

To make use of that advantage, Jin's thoughts raced to draw up a plan.

*(If I can incite them to defeat Maxwell on the spot, that might land a heavy blow on the 「Ouroboros」.)*

According to their conversation earlier, the 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」 is an important asset to the 「Ouroboros」. If it's possible to snatch away that spiritual attainment, it would probably deal them a heavy blow.

*(But I cannot be careless about the possibility that 「End Emptiness」, the Demon Lord who sealed Coppelia, might be a member of the 「Ouroboros」 as well.)*

And he could feel the start of cold sweat on his back as he thought out the ominous situation in his mind.

Even in the world of gods that is Little Garden, the legendary Demon Lords are also in existence.

Azi Dahaka, the 「Absolute Evil」.

Dystopia, the 「Locked World」 .

End Emptiness, the 「Winds of Decadence」 .

They were the existences that exceeded the rules of the strongest kind--- and were classified as 「The Last Trials of Humanity」 .

If any of them were to work with 「Ouroboros」 , that would mean a threat to the entire world of Little Garden. Besides, Jin might not have seen any of them with his own eyes before, but the comment from the prideful Sakamaki Izayoi had also been “I would not want to have a direct confrontation with such a being” when he had only encountered the Demon Lord once and not having known its identity then.

And that was enough to make Jin see it as a reason to determine them as a threat.

*(However, 「Winds of Decadence」 had been summoned over to the world of Little Garden as part of the Game logic and it is not a Demon Lord that has its own consciousness. It is said that as long as nothing is standing in the way of its game, it will not directly attack anyone.....)*

So rather than pondering over the possibility of it being a member, it might be more suitable to think of it as being made use of by others. Moreover, if it is a strong foe of such caliber, the probability of it being a core member of the 「Ouroboros」 would be very high.

*(The third perpetual motion machine..... angels..... 「Winds of Decadence」 . This makes no sense. I can't find the connection between them.)*

Jin struggled to find a connection but it was not possible for him to derive a path to the solution of the puzzle with his limited knowledge. Moreover, he did not know the actual mission to the existence of 「End Emptiness」 .

In addition, the solution to the problem required knowledge of the parallel worlds.

The only person present who could provide that information would be---  
“Rin. Those armored angels..... If they were angels, would you know which mythology faction they belong to?”

Propping his chin on his hand nonchalantly, Jin asked to gather more information. And being the one who followed under the successor of

「Ouroboros」, His Highness, it wouldn't be all too strange for Rin to know of such information.

Rin folded her arms across her chest as she give it some thought before looking up with a troubled look

“.....I guess I do know somewhat. But I did consider many stuff about it and have some sort of speculation.”

“Really?”

“Mhm. But it's really my own opinion and I hope that I'm wrong.”

“What do you mean?”

“Because that would mean that our enemy is far too strong. If my speculation isn't wrong..... the organization of 「Ouroboros」 will become an organization that far exceeds my thoughts in terms of its size.” Rin gave a small sigh at that.

Although it was obvious that she gave that sigh on purpose, Jin, with his limited interaction time, also knew that Rin was truly feeling the pressure of having no strategies available to counter their problem.

His Highness and his group were planning to rebel against their organization.

And this is only Jin's speculation. *Their positions within the organization weren't that high.*

Even if His Highness were to be promised a guarantee on his life, his identity was still one that was "A prop to realize the goal with a method in place to replace him at any time". Otherwise, things would not link up to the words that Rin said before of "There's no need to be killed now".

(*And the most important thing is the key phrase mentioned by Maxwell----the end of world theory written in the Hindu mythology: "Kali Yuga". If the spiritual power of His Highness were to be linked to that.....!*)

Then there is a definite way to confirm the identity of His Highness. There were no other possibilities. And his existence would fit with the other key phrases dropped by the people around him from time to time.

And the current disasters that happened would be for a reason.

If Jin's speculation is right, then the real identity of His Highness would be the legendary hero who had never appeared in the world of Little Garden before now. The Hero who is 「Destined to save the future」 .

Although it isn't in its complete state currently, it is possible that his complete form would be stronger than that of the Western son of God and Shakō.<sup>[2]</sup>

Recorded within the cosmology of the Hindu mythology is the four age cycle of eras.

At the peak of Human civilisation and its advancements, the death and destruction that the prosperous period invites is known as the “End of World Theory (Kali Yuga)”.<sup>[3]</sup>

And the last hero who would appear to save those people from the end of the world.

As the reincarnation of the Hindu Sun god and possessing an equal or higher spiritual power than that of Shakō, that hero's name is-----

*(No, there's no need to rush that line of thought for now. It's not too late to arrive at the conclusion after discussing it with Izayoi-san and the others.)*

The priority is still Maxwell at the moment.

“I understand. I will just use Rin’s conjecture as part of my reference in the formulating of the plan. If it is alright with you, please give me a simple rundown on your speculation.”

“..... Well, sure, it’s alright with me. But don’t lose hope after hearing my speculations okay?” Rin sighed while relieving herself of the responsibility by giving a warning.

She fell silent for a moment to structure her thoughts before starting from the basics of her speculation.

“Firstly, let’s start with the 「Maxwell Demon」 . This demon was proven to exist during the early 2000s.”

“.....? Do you mean that it has been given the ‘proof of being a demon’ due to its materialization in observable reality?”

“No. It was given proof in scientific research. The details of the proof entails a lot of testings done in the realm of thermophysics so I’m skipping that portion.....And using that concept as the basis for research, humans have successfully obtained the technology to draw energy readings from an environment that was originally devoid of such data. --- Hm, do you get it?

Maxwell demon isn't an actual demon, but it is a real existence due to the physical laws in the world."

"Wha...?"

Jin took in three gulps of cold air before he internalized Rin's words.

The reason behind names of 「Maxwell Demon」 and 「Laplace Demon」 is due to the figure of speech of an existence that is unobservable and unconfirmed..... hence being referred to as the thought experiments that are given a personification in the realm of science.

They are demons that are simultaneously acknowledged to be present and are doubted to exist. However, they were once rejected by the realms of science that they were originated from. And yet, they were acknowledged once more to exist in the world and are even observable. This is a big incident that had never seen a precedent in the history of Little Garden.

Jin wasn't too clear about what sort of thing could transform data into energy, but if it were a technique that could manifest things from nothing, that would be something that far exceeded the capabilities of human inventions.

To say that it has crossed into the realm of gods would not be a far fetched thing as well.

“Can it be that..... that’s the real identity of the 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」 .....!?”

“That’s what I think too. And it would seem that the situation in the parallel world is much more complicated than what we know of it.”

Mu~ Rin hugged her chest with a troubled expression.

Next, she snapped her finger before continuing into the explanation of her speculations.

“Suspicious point number 1:

If the technique that has been discovered during the proving of Maxwell Demons is the 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」 , we will be met with a conflict to our speculation. And that would be the idea of ‘Maxwell Demons being the very existence of the Third Perpetual Motion Machine’. If that is the case, it would result in the query of why is it being named the third in the first place.

Suspicious point number 2:

There is this strange point about having multiple possessors of the 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」 and there cannot be substitutes for the item that is termed as the last mysterious technique of Mankind. This suggests that the possessors may be of the same existence or have a relationship that is a mutual supportive sort.

Theory number 1:

The aforementioned suspicion cues us in that the Maxwell Demon is unrelated to the 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」, but the Maxwell Demon holds a part of the spiritual power that is to be obtained from the achievement of such an invention as a result of being part of the requirements for creating the perpetual motion machine.

Theory number 2:

It could be that I've been making things too complicated with my thoughts and that it is basically a much simpler reason in reality. Perhaps the Maxwell Demons are equivalent to the 「Third Perpetual Machine」 and that's it right?

----So **baby~**, that's all I've got for now, whatcha think?"<sup>[4]</sup>

“What do you mean by “Whatcha think?”, it’s got to be Theory 1.” Jin concurred with Rin on her first theory. At the same time, Jin was in admiration for this girl who could draw up the connections to have multiple theories within a short span of time. It might also be possible that her knowledge and speed of cognitive analysis are comparable to that of Izayoi’s.

Not wanting to lose to a person of his age, Jin renewed his spirits to ask.

“So the spiritual attainment of Maxwell has been figured out. Then regarding the connection between his spiritual attainment and the angeloid monsters, are we to assume that the process of the discovery is connected to a mythological faction?”

“Mhm, I also think that’s the case.”

“But.....we are in for trouble now. Even if it’s an angeloid creature to us, it’s actually a model that we are not too sure about at first glance and we could have associated it to other objects. Is there any other precedent to this occurrence before?”

Hearing Jin’s question, His Highness propped his chin with a hand as he spoke.

“I heard that when the theory of relativity was established, Einstein’s accomplishment and the Star striped flag were summoned over together. However, their locations are currently unknown. But I guess this is something similar?”

“But that’s an exception of the exceptions.”

“..... What do you mean?”

“It is said that if another person besides Einstein were to come up with the theory of relativity, it would bring about a future that is worse than what it already is. That would then escalate the process and bring forward the date of the end of the world.”

“Therefore, Einstein obtained a massive spiritual power and there was a time that many people called him the real identity of Azi Dahaka.

“That would mean that NBCR<sup>[5]</sup> weapons are the last trial?..... Mhm, Mah, although it isn’t good enough for a guess, the truth shouldn’t be that far from it as well, right? That way of putting it is quite intriguing and it does have some merit to be mulled over.”

Rin then walked to the side to ponder the possibility in His Highness’s words.

Whereas Jin started to use the time to digest the information that he had heard.

A skill or technique based 「Paradigm Shift」 should not be an accomplishment of an individual but is usually owed to a group of people who worked on it. Then the anthropomorphization of Laplace and Maxwell from their theories are due to the undeterminable theorist in their midst. WIth that in mind, it would be possible to assume that the 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」 has a connection with a religious organization as can be seen from those angeloid creatures.

Thinking up to this point, Jin suddenly thought of another related matter.

(..... Ei? Seems to be missing something.....?)

Just as Jin was feeling that sensation of having heard of a similar topic with regards to the 「Third Perpetual Motion Machine」 , a sense of dread was simultaneously creeping onto his entire being.

At the same time as Jin, who was chasing that elusive and dreaded thought, Rin got her next conjecture.

“The phenomenon of Azi Dahaka’s clone to harbor the power to wither away the forest..... that is also a spiritual attainment from the invention of biological weapons?..... no, wait a moment, that’s a weapon that utilizes the dispersion of microbes..... microbes? Oi, wait a moment!!!”

All of a sudden, Rin was shouting.

“Rin. Keep it down! It will be trouble for us if we’re discovered.

“It’s not the time to be thinking about that! Right, it almost slipped through my mind! Microscopic baterias..... No, that’s not it. It’s microscopic particles! And the newest perpetual motion mechanism! Damn, why didn’t I notice such an important detail?!! I’m such a baka!!”

Rin gesticulated her arms and shouted.

“What’s wrong? Quick, explain to us, Rin.” His Highness had wanted to admonish her behavior, but seeing that she was onto something, he hurriedly asked for an explanation.

“What else can it be! The summoning ritual that was used by Maxwell had been “Summon maxwell myths. 3S. Nano machine unit”..... yes, it’s nano

machine units! To add that phrase into the summoning ritual, it might just mean that nano machines are the real identity of the Maxwell demon.....!!”

Rin was covering her mouth as she spilled the conjecture which she was confident of having linked up the details.

“Even if they have found the absurd technique to materialize data, I doubt that it would be able to create a massive enough power to operate an entire city..... but if it’s just the energy to operate particle sized nano machines..... but it is not clear what the impact of using nanomachines on biological matter can cause..... unless this means that it is related to the

「Genome Tree」?..... If we were to assume the above, rather than calling this a research where a mythological faction has lent their aid, we might as well consider it as a product purely created from experiments. Or perhaps, it is a technique that secures the realm of the god’s divinity and hence gaining aid from them..... but to have such an influence to encompass the world and governance, there are only two such mythological factions..... this is bad, that means the mythological faction backing 「Ouroboros」 is really----!!?”

“Aiya, you’re actually able to put together a conjecture up to that level? You sure live up to my expectations, Ayazato Rin.”<sup>[6]</sup>

Suddenly, a cold gust swept over them.

Jin had heightened his vigilance upon hearing the unfamiliar voice. However, the other two were already beyond the level of being tensed. Their usual look of ease were wiped from their faces in an instant and the coloration of blood seemed to drain from their faces.

It was the first time that Jin had seen the duo with such pale and icy expressions. Their shoulders were tensed and it was just as though some adult had caught these two kids in the midst of their mischief. Even though the duo were definitely with brains that did not match the average child’s level of thinking.

The owner of that voice --- The male poet named Grimm of the 「Ouroboros」, appeared before them like his previous encounter with Azi Dahaka, had a shallow smile on his lips as he appraised the duo.

“Awesome. The disciples whom I thought were incompetent have unexpectedly improved themselves by self-study up to this stage? I honestly look forward to seeing your growths in another decade.”

“Sen....Sensei.....!”

“.....What did you come here for? You, the bard, should not have gotten the notice to take part in this operation.

“Hey, hey, that sure is cold of you. It’s one of the rare moments that I came over to help.”

“Help? Ha, I bet that you are here to make use of us. We are not interested in borrowing the strength of a useless poet who had his spiritual power and accomplishments stolen by a saint.”

“That’s really rude huh. We are all ticks who cling onto the fur of the same lion. Wouldn’t that make us sort of buddies?”

“Save your sleep talking for your eternal sleep. We only wish to cut off ties with the 「Ouroboros」. We never intended to have a direct confrontation from the very start. Don’t lump us together with that black-hearted bastard

who would want to usurp the 「Ouroboros」 alliance at the slightest chance.”

*Yeah, yeah, I got it.* The man laughed cheerfully.

Although Jin was curious about the appearance of this strange looking man, he found the immense pressure exerted by his presence too heavy to interrupt their conversation. Unconscious about the grabbing of his hands that were trembling, Jin held his breath and suppressed his questions.

*(Who.....?! No, it should be, what is that guy.....?!)*

Is he a human? A demon? Or a phenomenon? Although there wasn't a real feeling of a physical presence standing before them, his five senses were telling a different story of there being “something standing there”.

Rather than just an illusion, it was more apt to think of it as the rustle of footsteps in the background.

*(His Highness and Rin are being wary of him. However, he doesn't seem to be their enemy and he is not their comrade as well?..... Come to think of it, aren't I in the worst spot right now?)*

*(Yeah, You are obviously in a checkmate there. My condolences to you.)*

From the ring of Hamelin, Percher interjected her comment on his situation.

*(Percher, is it someone that you know too? Do you have any info on him?)* Jin asked as cold sweat beaded his forehead.

*(It's not something as simple as knowing him or not. It's that I didn't expect this guy to join up with 「Ouroboros」 as well. By the quality of that voice, he should be the person who summoned me into Little Garden.)*

*(.....Wha?)*

Jin let out a slightly strangled off exclamation while Percher continued with a simplified reply with a slight anxious quality to her tone.

*(There seems to be a change in his appearance..... but his voice is still the same as I remember it to be. I'm very sure about that. He's the legendary demon lord who used to lead the 「Fantasy Magic Grimoires (Grimm Grimoire)」.)*

The poet who uses the folklores of 「The Piper of Hamelin」 , 「Cinderella」 , 「Puss in Boots」 as the medium to summon the demons of the fairytales.

To the extent of being classified as the fourth strongest fantasy creation of humankind.

That is the identity of this man, says Percher.

*(Word was that he had died, but it seems that he's still alive and well. With him around, it does seem more plausible for he to be summoned over..... but I guess if I had thought over it carefully, I would have also figured out as much. It's clearly something that I had completely overlooked.)*

*(But if you refer to the fairytales of the Grimm, weren't they written by the Grimm brothers?)*

*(.....I don't know. But, I heard His Highness mention something about "having your accomplishments taken away by a saint" or something. Perhaps, it is because of that.)*

They two of them were busy speculating, but there were too many mysteries with regards to this man's identity. Purely figuring out his existence could perhaps be a form of accomplishment in itself.

If they were able to make it back alive.

“Really now, why did you become so arrogant and self-important? If you acted more cutesy or like a maiden in distress, you would definitely fit the characteristic of my favourite toys.”

“What’s close to the ink block will be equally stained black. So now, make it quick, state your intent.”

His Highness responded warily while staring at the man with hostility.

The atmosphere was such that it would seem plausible for His Highness to eliminate the other at the slightest opening.

“You are running out of time? I guess your situation really does call for my empathy, but you should also be relishing in your state of hopelessness for a moment. .... Mah, I guess saying such stuff isn’t of much meaning at this point. My intention is just as I said earlier. I’m here to help you, so in return, do lend me a hand as well.”

“Go eat shit.”

“Seriously now, why did you turn out to be such a brat?”

“Much like my sensei, I’m sure of that. --- Well, although His Highness says that, please do lend us a hand if you do intend to help us. If it’s possible, could you please tell us of your brilliant plan, sensei?”

Rin straightened her posture while clasping her hands before her in her plea.

This attitude from her was more likely born from fear rather than respect. Her current movements were still a great distance away from her usual bouncy and lively persona.

“Well, it can’t be called a strategy, but I just did a little negotiation with a Death God. That fellow, Koumei, also seems to have returned from the West Side. So let’s leave Maxwell to him for now. Rin and Graiya will follow me to wait for an opportunity. Aura will be returning a grimoire and His Highness will be joining the game on the other side. So get going and perform your duty as a candidate of the (Origin).”

“.....!?”

The two in question exchanged a glance and sucked in a cold breath at the same time.

The words of that man couldn’t be more clear than that.

“You are letting His Highness..... fight Azi Dahaka? Did you mean it like that?”

“Aah. Although it is earlier than what we had planned it to be, it should be possible to give him a few punches when we have two Sun Authorities right?”

“Then, I will also....!”

“Don’t spout nonsense. How can I allow my cute disciple to simply run around like that.”

A smile was plastered across his face but it lacked the warmth of a teacher’s love for a student.

Be it for the intention of the mission or for his own pleasure of using them as his playthings, none of that was visible on the expression of this man. What is evident for sure is the fact that the shots were now all in the hands of this man to call and beckon.

“Taking into considering the goals of 「Ouroboros」 , we are unable to let you defeat Maxwell at this stage. Because that will lead to an early

proclamation of the coming of “Kali Yuga”. His defeat would be very troubling from various aspects of the matter.

“.....troubling? Whom does it trouble?”

“I will be troubled.”

“Really? Then I better get all my effort out to eliminate this Maxwell!”

“Shut up you smelly rascal brat. Fine, you can just go and fight for the jade seal from his Majesty and come back. Anyhow, you do not have the room to reject the plan, your traitorous intentions are already exposed for quite a while. Don’t forget that you are still of a state of being just a tool who is on probation of being thrown aside if you are unable to give results. If you intend to live for a while longer, you should just listen to the suggestions of the Game maker.”

He might have said it in his shock and hurry to stop His Highness, but he was less easygoing than before.

The last sentence was clearly an order. It hinted that if the orders were to be defied, it would be best for His Highness to be prepared for the worst.

Perhaps His Highness had also realised that about his words and he only gave a loud click of his tongue before sliding his gaze towards Jin and RIn.

“..... Sure, I will have a condition then. You better make sure that they are safe. You can do that right?”

“Hm? I don’t think that you are in the position to ask for conditions. But, I will just let that slide. After all, we’ve known each other for so long.”

The gaze of that man pierced through Jin--- No, it was Percher to be more accurate.

Jin tightened his grip around the ring, seemingly in preparation to protect Percher who gave a tremble within.

His Highness stood between them and stared closely at the man.

“..... I understand. I will let you see for yourself. Azi Dahaka.... 「The Last Trial of Humanity」 will be defeated by me.”

## **Notes and References:**

- 1.** Editor Note: The Abityas are the seven celestial spirits of the sun which also includes Surya. The name also means ‘of Aditi’, in reference of Abityas being the offsprings of Aditi in Hinduism.
- 2.** [magrefnotes: I believe that the author censored the name to prevent an offense to a religion. Full name would be that of Buddha’s real name. Would need to confirm the censorship with raws.] [Frozennotes: Well, in raws it was Shak○. So Shakuten. It’s probably a reference to Indra.]
- 3.** [magrefnotes: for your extra readings: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuga> bad source that is open to every one to edit, but oh well, lazy to find another one :p]
- 4.** [magrefnotes: gosh, I have no idea how to fit that English word of baby in.....]
- 5.** [magrefnotes:NBCR- Nuclear, Biological, Chemical, Radioactive]
- 6.** [magrefnotes: Just a reminder from jp-ch translator Hong Lian that the girl in [Canaria Orphanage] is called Ayazato Suzuka.]

## **Chapter 2**

### **Part 1**

--- Airborne Castle. The kitchen.

Having tended to her own wounds, Kuro Usagi left the castle tower that she was warded in and started helping out in the kitchen which was located at another tower.

Even in times of war, tummies would go hungry. The hunger that returned from the relief of reuniting with her comrades motivated Kuro Usagi to whip up some dishes for sustenance.

*(Aiyaya. Everyone here is busying themselves with the food preparations for both the injured and the refugees.)*

Kuro Usagi moved in small hops around the kitchen as her usagimimi waved in the air.

Borrowing a corner of the kitchen that no one else was using, Kuro Usagi placed some ingredients she found around the place together to boil up a simple soup of egg and vegetables. Fortunately, there was a storage of large quantities of spices so spicing things up for the taste amounted to no problem at all.

Following that, Kuro Usagi stir-fried another dish of lamb jerkies and egg.

These dishes were a simple fare, but now being a critical time for them all, one would be grateful for such a luxury.

*(Although they have managed to buy some time with the authorities of 「Host Master」, it is unknown as to how long that peace would last before the start of the next battle. Kuro Usagi must prepare herself in the meantime as well.)*

Currently, the assembly for the battle strategizing was being held with the others and the next call for them would surely be the deployment of all able-bodied personnel. If that were to be the case, the likelihood for Kuro Usagi to be assigned as one of the strengths of the main force would be very high indeed.

Thus, for the sake of carrying out her duties later, now was the time for her to replenish her strength as much as possible.

*(Since these usagimimi have returned, Kuro Usagi's not a burden anymore. Kuro Usagi will work hard to not hold back Izayoi-san, Asuka-san and Yō-san.)*

Clenching her fists, Kuro Usagi silently firmed her resolve. And just when Kuro Usagi was about to carry away her completed dishes, a familiar voice came from behind.

“Ooh, that looks tasty. Kuro Usagi-dono, may I have a taste too?”

Kuro Usagi shook her usagimimi as she turned her head back.

As it was a voice that she recalled having heard before, Kuro Usagi turned her back with her guard down, only to widen her eyes after seeing the owner of the voice.

(*Woah Woah.....! Where, where did this beauty come from...?!*)

Kuro Usagi frantically took a step back as she took in the sight of the female whom she had not met before. She had seen quite a few beauties in her life. However, this person was on a complete league of her own

In contrast to that set of strong and determined eyes that contained the sense of demureness and great intellect, her breasts which were bigger than average being matched with a vertical striped sweater with a low neckline only served to give off an enticing feeling.

Her slightly long flaxen hair were plaited wonderfully and it reached from her shoulders to lie between her breasts. And naturally, that would have attracted the line of sight of any onlookers.

Different from the vibe that Leticia exudes, this woman gave off the appeal of a mature woman.

*(Shirayuki-sama and Willa-san possess sizable breasts, but these are also.....!)*

“Kuro Usagi-dono, It’s okay to look, but shouldn’t you show some restrain?”

The mystery beauty chided with a wry smile. It was only then that Kuro Usagi who was peeping into the other person’s cleavage was brought back to reality. Indeed, that was a truly unrestrained gaze. It is only because Kuro Usagi’s a female that it could be laughed aside. However, a slap would have been reasonable if it were to be a guy doing that very same act of staring.

---But, who in the world is this person?

There was no way for anyone to forget such a beauty even if they only had just a single glance.

Moreover, this person seemed to know Kuro Usagi.

Ignoring Kuro Usagi’s bewilderment, the mysterious beauty combed back her hair to peer at the dish.

“Oops. Is that mutton jerky.....? And I just wanted to have a bite together, but now this is a little troubling. Cannibalising would be bad.”

“The same race as the mountain goats? Eh, could you be,”

“Mhm. This is my first time taking on the form of a human. So allow me to introduce myself once more--- I’m the mountain goat celestial beast, Amalthea. As a comrade of the same community, I will be in your care.”

Being greeted with a friendly smile in a polite fashion, Kuro Usagi quickly responded in kind. And thinking about it carefully, it would not be strange that she was able to perform an anthropomorphization. After all, Amalthea is a celestial beast as well as a divine being.

Kuro Usagi lifted her head as she recalled the legends of the female who stood before herself.

*(This person is the elder of the Greek god faction. The nurse-mother of Zeus, the sky god. As well as a harvest goddess and the strongest shield.)*

.....even though it was a summarised description, it was already quite amazing.

Before a rare type celestial beast such as Amalthea, the 「Moon Rabbit」s and the pure blooded vampires paled in comparison.

Even though her spiritual level would have fallen somewhat, it was still unbelievable that someone as important as her would join 「No Name」. Then, just what kind of contract could Asuka have made with her?

Sensing the intent behind Kuro Usagi's gaze, Amalthea then smiled as she pointed towards the canteen.

"Since it's not often that we meet like this, let's just go to the canteen to have a chat. I've always wanted to have a chat with our Community's strategist, Kuro Usagi-dono. Would that be fine with you?"

"YES! Let's do that, of course!"

Kuro Usagi's usagimimi perked up as she replied. Seeing that the strategic meetings will be taking a little while longer, Kuro Usagi took the chance to have a chat with Amalthea.

The duo then prepared some tea and snacks before setting off in search for a space to have their meal.

## Part 2

Having borrowed the use of a VIP room, Kuro Usagi and Amalthea, who had finished their meal quickly, were seemingly out of breath as they downed their teas to continue their chat.

"But Kuro Usagi-dono and master were actually able to pull through that sort of dangerous situation. When the two of you were teleported by Maxwell, even I had my hopes crushed then. Or should I say that this was to be expected of the 「Aristocrat of Little Garden」."

Amalthea was smiling as she offered her praises. However, Kuro Usagi was quick to shake her head.

“No, that’s not it. The fact that we were able to escape that sort of dangerous situation was really due to the endowment of protection from my patron god as well as the gamble that Asuka had taken to make that wish. This life was supposed to have been burnt away as according to the legends of the 「Moon Rabbit」.”

When bestowed with the Divinity of the War God\*Indra, the body of the 「Moon Rabbit」, which had already been endowed with a strong body and strength, would then surely receive a power that could surpass any ordinary divine entities in strength.

However that would also be the enactment of the 「Moon Rabbit」’s accomplishment where one would exchange one’s life for a miraculous forbidden power.

Originally as the price for the miracle, Kuro Usagi should have paid her life. “What had been bestowed wasn’t only the Gift. It was also my patron god’s past that was passed down to me in the form of a revelation. --- “Herald of the War God, please stand for your comrades”. To Kuro Usagi, that revelation is the true Gift.”

Placing both her hands before her chest with pride as the patron god of her race had displayed an act that was only to be expected from a resident of Little Garden, there was nothing that she could be more proud of.

Although recently she had been called 「Aristocrat of Little Garden(lol)」 and was taken to be a fool, the symbolic characteristic of self-sacrifice was the true face of the 「Moon Rabbit」 s.

“..... is that so? I actually thought that Indra wouldn’t have much positive points besides that which was said in the legends. I guess I should re-evaluate my opinion of him.”

“Mh Hm? I won’t be letting that comment slide like that. Kuro Usagi heard that the elder god of the Greek faction is also quite playful, right? Especially with regards to his female relationships.”

“Aiya, wouldn’t that count as me slapping my own mouth? But the brave adventures of Indra is just as comparable to Zeus (that kiddo). Amongst them would be the story of being cursed after laying his hands on another’s wife. And I heard that the curse in revenge caused Indra to sprout many female parts all over his body,”

“Waaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!! I don’t know, I don’t know, Kuro Usagi doesn’t know! Talking about that stuff is a big taboo for a herald!!!”<sup>[1]</sup>

Her usagimimi had completely reddened as she covered Amalthea's mouth.

Since it's made a taboo, there should be some sort of punishment for it.

Amalthea wished to continue the topic that sparked much happiness within her, but decided to stop on the account of seeing the frantic efforts on Kuro Usagi's end.

--- Just conveniently mentioning on the side, that curse caused Indra to reach a whole new realm, but that is another thing altogether.

Revealing an elegant smile, Amalthea then sipped at her cup of tea before continuing to the main topic.

"Although it is rejected by many people, the system (origin) of the gods and human history is closely related. Because we are mutual observers who reside in separate universes, those who belong to the "gods most similar to humans" such as Indra and Zeus would then be easily affected by their human sides.

Mah, among them are---- those who are born human but are supposed to have been born among the gods to rise as the leader of the gods."

Hearing such words that had a meaning behind it, Kuro Usagi straightened her back and usagimimi.

Born human but becoming a leader of the gods. There could only be one person whom Amalthea referred to with that line.

“Could it be that, you are referring to ..... Asuka-san?

“Mhm. Her talent far exceeds that of a human vessel. However, the existence of master is, how should I put it..... strange. Not balanced. Hard to believe. Religious factions for the gods that have a human as its core do exist such as the Japanese mythologies and the bible, but in her case, it can be said to be the real meaning of 「Unknown」 .”

“.....Indeed. But even though we are still unable to clearly see the origin of Asuka-san, the clues are still more than the other two.”

Sakamaki Izayoi and Kasukabe Yō were the exceptions outside the frame.

Whereas, Asuka’s power was the exception within the frame. It was for certain that it would be counted as an unusual power, but it was still a power that was classified in a different direction from the other two.

“Moreover, we had heard from Garol-san of 「Six Scars」 that Asuka-san might be an 「Atavism」<sup>[2]</sup>. A phenomenon whereby a divine spirit has manifest its 「atavism」 . A financial conglomerate that is in the top five tier of Japan..... Asuka-san’s bloodline, would be expected to have some sort of relationship to the Japanese royalty who bore a god in the form of a human,”

“No, that’s not possible.”

Amalthea's reply was immediate and Kuro Usagi quickly shut her mouth after being met with a reply in such a self-assured tone.

Amalthea placed aside her tea cup before continuing.

"I understand where Kuro Usagi-dono's coming from. But the Japanese mythologies that have their origins tied to royal families have undergone the ritual that led them to forsaking their Divinity after the end of the second world war..... 「Universal Declaration of Human Rights」 ."

"YES. Kuro Usagi's usagimimi also heard that it is after that war that they undertook the ritual to descend their divine statuses and became ordinary humans. And Kuro Usagi thinks that it is those displaced Divinities which are now without a vessel are the ones to have chosen Asuka-san who may have some kind of bloodline relation.....?"

"Mah, ordinarily speaking, that thought would have sounded plausible, I guess. The Divinity that she possess is similar as well as it's the closest to the cosmology of the Japanese religion. The strength of master would be the real manifestation of the Yōyorozu no kamigami 「Eight hundred thousand gods」 . On that point, it's not wrong at all."

"Then,"

“But, if that were the case, it would cause 「Kudou Asuka」 to become an existence quintessential for the country of Japan. However, according to the history of humankind when I last checked, that sort of turning point and scenario--- the 「Paradigm Shift」 did not exist.”

It was stated as simply as that. However, it was indeed the case.

If Kudou Asuka were to be an existence born to replace the core of the Japanese mythological god faction, it would then lead to the creation of a turning point, 「Paradigm Shift」, and cause a huge impact on the timeline of history.

However, that did not happen.

Besides, in Izayoi's flow of time, the financial conglomerate of the Kudou family did not exist.

Amalthea propped her chin on one hand as she started to outline her conjectures.

“The 「Kudou Financial Conglomerate」 that should not exist. This organisation was erased from history when it was dissolved by the departure of Master. We can then assume that the changing of the twisted history would be the command of master. But even if that were to be case, the powers obtained from the stars would be far too immense.”

“Mhm, indeed. If this is the case, Asuka-san’s power would just be as we initially mistook it to be. It would only be at the level of controlling the hearts of people.”

It is true that Kudou Asuka possessed an immense power, but its existence in her body was completely disproportionate. Perhaps given some time, Kuro Usagi might be able to think up of a reason for the obtaining of such power, but even so, none of the proposed ideas would give the feeling of having hit the bull’s eye.

Kuro Usagi’s usagimimi were bent downwards as she racked her brains over the problem. However, the answer would not come to her that easily.

Amalthea watched Kuro Usagi with a quiet gaze before she spoke hesitantly. “Kuro Usagi-dono. I have arrived at an answer that I feel is the closest in possibility regarding the spiritual attainment of master. However..... that answer, might cause you to feel pained in your heart.”

“Aie?”

Kuro Usagi straightened her back upon hearing such a warning.

There was a tensed feeling in Amalthea's gaze that wasn't present in their conversation before and she leaned forward before speaking again to Kuro Usagi.

"I heard from master that Kuro Usagi-dono, about your sacrifices for the sake of the Community's continuity. For the sake of saving the fallen organization, you must have worked to your bones. And I could guess that the source of the strength in your heart is for the sake of reclaiming your lost Flag and Name ..... and your previous comrades."

".....Yes. I believe that together with Izayoi-san, Asuka-san, and Yō-san, we will surely get them back some day.

"Then what if the existence of Asuka were to become the one thing that shatters your dream?"

Caught by such a sudden question, Kuro Usagi widened her eyes.

The directness in her words were unthinkable to have come from the lips of Amalthea who continued to have that quiet gaze in her eyes. However, there was no animosity in the gaze and it was somewhat closer to testing and probing for something. Although the question was sudden and rude, Kuro Usagi remained calm as she digested those words.

Amalthea did not seem to have approached her to start a discussion on Asuka's birth.

It was more likely that what she wanted to discuss with Kuro Usagi was a bigger and more foundational problem.

The space between them was filled with an atmosphere of silence. However, it was also apparent that the bustle within the castle had already subsided. That would mean the period of collecting and tending to the injured had come to a close.

If one would listen closely, one could hear the slight wind hitting the windows and doors in the castle and the unbearable silence that filled the entire room.

Their gazes had never left the other.

Even then, Kuro Usagi's words that broke the silence, were beyond the expectations of Amalthea.

“.....that matter, does it concern the case of our comrades being thrown into the Outer World's time stream?”

“.....!?”

“Croix-sama once mentioned that he returned from the Outer World’s time stream and thus gives credence to the possibility of our other comrades being thrown in there as well. Moreover, the possibility of them returning alive to our Community is low. In a way, I’ve already prepared for the worst with regards to that matter.”

Kuro Usagi’s calm voice was completely unlike her past self. One could easily hear the determination in her voice and it wasn’t the kind of a temporary determination that lasts for a day or two.

If the possibility wasn’t considered from the day when it all started..... three years ago and given a fair share of acceptance for being a viable possibility, one would unlikely remain this calm. Her miscalculation of Kuro Usagi’s determination caused Amalthea to turn her gaze downward in awkwardness and she apologized sheepishly.

“I said all that with a slight intention of testing your resolve and I’m truly sorry. I had been using the frail Kuro Usagi-dono as my model of expectations.”

“No, it’s fine. It is also surprising to Kuro Usagi that I’m able to take this thing all so calmly. If it were the Kuro Usagi of a slight while before, she

might have made a huge ruckus about this conjecture. Perhaps, this is also a side effect of obtaining Indra's gift."

Kuro Usagi rubbed the back of her usagimimi while giving a feeble smile. It was impossible for one to be unshaken by such an impact, but the current Kuro Usagi was just strong enough to accept these stuff.

Amalthea closed her eyes as she continued.

".....is that so? As part of the endowment of Indra's Divinity, the lotus of Buddhahood might have bloomed within your spirit and it is possible that you have gotten some revelation along the process as well. That might explain the quality of this calmness Kuro Usagi-dono's exuding which feels as calm as a summer sea."

"That, That's exaggerating the praises for me. If I hadn't heard of Croix-sama's experience earlier, Kuro Usagi might have made a scene as per usual."

"Hoho, I will just leave it as that then. ----Then, what do you think? If my conjecture were to be correct..... no, I would rate my confidence level in my hypothesis to be 80 to 90% accurate for it needs to be that high for me to actually broach this subject with you. Will you then be able to bear the

uncertainties of the fate of your comrades who were thrown to the other world?”

The hesitant probing gaze was once more reflected in those eyes of Amalthea.

And Kuro Usagi returned a nod with a tranquil gaze of her own.

### **Part 3**

On the other side at the same time.

Kudou Asuka, Leticia and Shirayuki-hime were huddled together while resting after hearing of the discussion on Azi Dahaka countermeasures.

Among the trio, Asuka was the palest in her complexion as the colour of blood seemed to have drained from her face. She was holding her hands tightly while having an expression of worry and a brooding silence. If it were the usual fiery Asuka, she would have voiced her dissatisfaction earlier.

Chewing her lip to keep calm, Asuka asked Leticia.

“.....that’s unbelievable. Leticia, is she serious about that plan? That’s completely nuts. can we really trust it?”

“Aah. In terms of the calculations for success rates, Lappy’s the strongest brain for that.”

“Mhm. Since it is the strategy designed by the 「Laplace Demon」, I will believe in it then. Although that would place a huge mental strain on Asuka.....”

Shirayuki-hime had a serious expression as she concurred with Leticia with regards to the trust in Laplace’s ability. However, the role that Asuka was about to play was much larger than what she had described it to be. Moreover, it wasn’t a humane plan to be carried out either.

“..... Bestowing mock divinity to the remaining strength count. The fire dragons and the ghost types should be able to withstand the process to some extent, but how many would actually be left standing to continue to battle,”

“Shirayuki-dono.”

Hearing the chiding tone in Leticia’s voice, Shirayuki-hime covered her mouth quickly.

Asuka’s expression only became graver than before.

Mock Divinity was a double edged sword that granted an individual god level powers in exchange for the shaving off of one’s lifespan.

*(In the past, Asuka was only using her power to twist the will of her opponents. Hence she was unable to effectively utilise the effect of mock*

*Divinity enhancement. However, in the case when the target's determination is aligned to the bestowed Divinity, the spiritual boost would be pretty significant.)*

It might have been a necessary action to be undertaken for the operation.

However, Kudou Asuka who was to carry out that operation was only just a fifteen year old girl.

The thought of making others rush to their deaths and gamble their lives on something for the sake of being useful in battle is not a natural thought that commonly crosses her mind on any usual day. It was a responsibility that was too heavy for such a young person like her to bear.

“.....Leticia. Is that plan absolutely necessary?”

“Aah. Be it a plan to defeat or to seal Azi Dahaka, there’s a definite need to get that guy’s huge spiritual power..... no, I should just describe it as quantity for an easier understanding. There is a need to make him spit out all of those portions.”

“Thus, there’s a need to have enough strength in numbers to deal with the large quantities of clones. For that end, Asuka’s endowment of mock Divinity to the masses is absolutely necessary. Although we might not feel that good about having to force a young one such as yourself to carry out this plan.....

but there isn't any other method that would be more constructive than that. Looking at another perspective, this would give a huge boost to the success rate of the operation---“

“No, that's not enough.”

Coming from the other side of the large VIP room doors was a voice of a male who interrupted Shirayuki-hime's words--- Mandra's voice.

The sudden interruption caused the female group some slight dissatisfaction for being bothered, but it was followed by an apology.

“I apologize for the interruption. I had thought of entering the final tying up of the strategy discussions, but it became an eavesdropping act instead.”

“.....it's alright. After all, it does concern everyone too.”

The voices of both parties were stiff. After all, the people who would be putting their lives on the line in the upcoming battle were none other than them.

And everyone would have their own thoughts on the matter.

Having gotten the permission to enter, Mandra did not sit himself with them and opted to stand while making his request.

“Regarding the subsequent combat operation, we of 「Salamandra」 would like to make a request to the 「No Names」.”

“That, is it for me?”

“No, we would like to make a request from Leticia-dono.”

Hearing these unexpected words, Asuka turned her surprised gaze towards Leticia.

But Leticia seemed to have anticipated this in advance and cold sweat were already beading on her forehead.

“Mandra-dono. Could it be that..... you are here to talk about the battle 200 years prior?”

“That’s right. As expected of one who had experienced the battle 200 years ago first hand. Then, this makes things simpler. We would like to borrow your power once more for this current battle. The power of Little Garden’s Knights--- the Vampires.”

Getting a hint of the meaning behind Mandra’s words, Asuka and Shirayuki-hime sucked in a breath of cold air.

--- wanting to borrow the power of the vampires.

These words could only mean one thing.

“Could, Could it be that ..... you intend to cause your comrades of 「Salamandra」 to undergo vampirification?!”

“What stupidity!! Vampirification is only a nice sounding term but that doesn’t change the fact that it is only just a step away from being zombified into a cannibalistic creature, and is hence a banned technique! Needless to say, it is a restricted Gift of the dark side! Are you planning to pollute the blood that holds the legacy of the strongest kind?!”

“I know that more clearly than anyone else!!!”

Mandra roared loudly in an intensity that rivalled Shirayuki-hime’s loud-voiced chiding.

“Being bestowed mock Divinity..... Is indeed a large power-up. However, without a strong and durable physical body or spiritual vessel, it is impossible to maintain that form for a sufficient duration. In the end, that would only force the main force to have a limited time to draw a clear distinction between victory and defeat and have their choices greatly restricted. In that case, we would be giving a huge burden of responsibility to the frontline fighters.

“.....that’s...”

Shirayuki-hime could not find a come-back for that point.

Originally, the three headed dragon is already a foe that's out of their league. Thus, for the sake of gaining victory in this fight, there was a need to carry out the operation with precision similar to threading a needle head.

“However, with us dragon types coupled with vampirification that strengthens our bodies, it would also serve to maintain our mock Divinity forms for a longer time in battle. As long as our spiritual capacities are boosted to that extent, even my useless self would be able to have a bout with that three headed dragon to sate my vengeance.”

If that power had been able to boost the Titan race from their previous encounter, one would definitely expect a similar result when giving that same power to the large sized Fire Dragons or to those with a less diluted bloodline.

However, it is just as Shirayuki-hime says, the act of doing so would defy moral grounds.

Allowing evil to consume them for the sake of victory would then invite an inevitable retribution.

And knowing the type of hazard that the curse would cause the receiver, Leticia gave a big sigh as she levelled her gaze on Mandra.

“...Mandra-dono. Are you planning to be vampirified as well?”

“Of course. With Sandora missing at the moment, it falls down to me to lead the charge. Therefore, how is it possible for me to be the only one who is spared from the curse?”

“I see that you have great determination, but I presume that you have said that while understanding the meaning of your words, do you not? This vampirification might actually cause 「Salamandra」 to be destroyed in the literal sense.”

Leticia’s question was laced with a deeper meaning as she asked to reconfirm his determination.

And that tone was not lost on Asuka as she cocked her head quizzically.

“Leticia. What...what do you mean? Could you be implying that it will be fatal?”

“Fatal isn’t quite the right term to use.. It will definitely give an effect like Mandra says it would. The spiritual power and the physical vessel, which is the body, would have a great boost in strength. However, it comes at a price and that would be..... the truth behind 「Salamandra」 ’s irrecoverable aging population.”

“Although Laplace tried to secretly change the battle proposal, we of 「Salamandra」 are facing a threat from a different direction altogether. The

number of deaths is really astounding. But besides that problem..... would be direct threats from the short life spans of vampirified individuals and the decline in fire dragon birth rates to reducing it to 1 in a hundred.”

At this point, Asuka, who learnt the truth, had a look of surprise on her face.

When compared to the sacrifices in battle, this might just be a reality that could make it all the worse with its serious implications.

The cost from the vampirification ----and the loss of their fertility.

If it is only the shortening of one generation’s lifespan, it might still be salvageable for their clan. However, it would be a different story if they were to lose their fertility as well. The already small population of the fire dragons would then face a threat far worse than a plague.

“I heard that the current numbers of the fire dragon race is roughly five thousand strong. Whereas the numbers in the past, 200 years prior, was at thrice that amount. .....Although there were deaths in the great battle 200 years ago, the main reason for that decrease would still be the result of the curse of infertility and shortened lifespans of the vampirification process. Am I right?”

“.....That’s right. If we wanted to be really precise about the matter, it would be that the vampirified individuals would need to take some blood from their

own race if they wanted to have a longer lifespan. Whereas, even those who would reject the consumption of blood would be able to live for a dozen years or so..... However, using longevity to overcome the few numbers and low fertility rate is what makes the two curses fatal to our race.”

As a result, the strength of the 「Salamandra」 organization has been greatly decreased.

This is because the decrease in numbers for an army that comprises of a single race would be directly proportional to the decrease in its strength.

“Mandra-dono. I hope that you will reconsider the matter. Let’s back up a hundred steps to consider it in this perspective. Even if I were to help you with the vampirification process, Sandora-dono is still missing and if the only one left to carry the burden of responsibility for leading your people were to be vampirified, it would be a total end to the 「Salamandra」 leader’s bloodline. It is the equivalent of disbanding the Community..... Or are you implying that you are planning on begging Sala-dono, who ran away, to come back.”

Leticia watched Mandra closely as she implored his reconsideration with a weighty tone. In addition, within those words was a question that intended to remind him of his possible responsibility as a leader if he has yet to realise

that. After all, the organization of 「Salamandra」 was just pushed into such a tight corner in the current situation.

If one were to consider the rebuilding after the battle, the minimum requirement would be for Mandra Doltrake to be living and unharmed.

*(The understanding.... Of the continuity of one's race or organization.....)*

Asuka watched their conversation intensely while gritting her teeth. No matter what the reason had been for Asuka, she had been one who ran away from a situation like that. Even though she had been seen as a terrifying witch for having the ability to hold sway over the hearts of people, it did not dismiss the fact that she was expected to be the next head to lead the financial conglomerate.

And she, who had thrown aside all that to escape into the other world, did not have the right to interrupt this conversation.

Leticia and Mandra stared at each other tensely.

But unexpectedly, it was Leticia who lowered her gaze first while giving a sigh.

“.....I just don't get you, Mandra-dono. You are the kind of person who would even make use of other Demon Lords to bring glory to your

organization, aren't you? It should be your wish to glorify 「Salamandra」 , isn't it?"

"That wish has not changed one bit."

"Then, treasure yourself. The blood that flows within you represents the future of the current 「Salamandra」 . Have you considered what would your comrades think if they were to learn that they had no future even if they scored a victory here?"

Compared to her chiding tone earlier, her words sounded closer to an advice this time. Having known each other for a long time, she would also be hoping for a solution that did not involve an entire reconstruction of the organisation from its very roots.

Precisely because Mandra understood Leticia's well-meaning behind her words, he had controlled himself from a usual hot-headed loud retort.

Moreover, if Leticia wasn't a person who had contact with his Community even before his birth, she would not be wasting such lengths to give an advice as patiently as she did.

".....Actually, before coming here, I had gone to ask Laplace on the whereabouts of Sandora."

"That's.... Hm, and what did you find out?"

“ It was determined that the motive behind the Demon King of Confusion’s control over Sandora was..... to destabilize the situation in our organisation, 「Salamandra」 .”

“.....!”

The Demon King of Confusion is an evil god that appears during the instability of a society. And judging by the situation 「Salamandra」 was in, it was only natural for the Demon King of Confusion to appear.

“There are two conditions for Sandora to be released. First would be the development of Sandora’s own mind and body to obtain the capability and capacity to rid herself of Demon King of Confusion’s possession. Secondly would be for the targeted organization to work as one to right the chaos and confront the Demon King of Confusion.”

“..... Just for that, you decided to defile the purity of your blood?”

“That’s correct. Although there are quite a number of respectable individuals in 「Salamandra」 , there are quite a number of naïve people as well. It is those naïve people who would likely plan on using the opportunity to elevate me to the leadership position to maintain 「Salamandra」 ’s operations. However, if they were to find out that I’m infertile and unable to produce anymore heirs, they would definitely go and save Sandora.”

Saying up to there, Mandra suddenly broke into a bitter laugh.

Perhaps, that was a mirthless humour made at himself.

“We..... Have always been leaving bad impressions on her. An elder sister who left the organization and a useless elder brother who has a deformed Dragon Horn due to illness. Even though we are over a hundred years old, we as members of the family have only brought shame to our name. Those must be her honest thoughts. And the only thing that I can do now would be to protect the leadership position for Sandora.”

The deformed Dragon Horn--- rather than the result of an illness, it's better described as a fault in the developmental years.

And for the dragon kind, the horn would be similar in significance to the lion's teeth or the wings of a bird.

Although it would not cause death to the individual, it was definitely fatal if one were to look at the importance of the bloodline's continuity. Therefore, it was in that instance that he had to give up on the rights to the inheritance.

“I agree with your sound advice, Leticia-dono. However, clinging onto such a small sliver of hope is only similar to building castles in the air. The only way to boost our ranks of 「Salamandra」 would be to require a dragon king's bloodline. May the dark clouds that surround our people be dispersed by our

roars--- Even if it is the last valiant roar before our demise, as long as our voices are able to reach Sandora, 「Salamandra」 will surely be awakened from the abyss of stars one day.”

「Salamandra」, the descendants of the Demon Lord TaiSui and the reincarnation of the Equator's celestial dragon.

Although the path of the Sun, as it makes its way across the skies, would welcome a period of sunset, it would not bring about a total darkness for the night. And that was the belief that was reflected in the depths of his eyes.

Staring into Mandra's eyes and having recognised the strong iron-clad will within them, Leticia gave a laugh of nostalgia.

“.....Fufu. Mandra, you've become a fine warrior after that gap of a hundred years, huh. If Canaria were able to see the current you, she would also be glad about the changes.”

“Who knows? After all, it's Canaria-sensei that we're talking about. It's possible that she would have a laughing fit before giving only a passing grade.”

“No, no, she won't. Canaria said that you had the potential since the time that she saw you in your younger years. The exact words were {“Mán-chan is

really capable and has the potential to be cultivated”}. It really is a waste that you were unable to develop into a full dragon.”

Leticia giggled as she mentioned Mandra’s nickname from his younger days.

Asuka and Shirayuki exchanged glances upon hearing the nickname that did not suit the current person in question.

Whereas the person himself, Mandra, had fallen silent. He then feinted a cough as he searched for a way to reply.

“Hmph..... That’s all for my request. So, allow me to make that request to 「No Name」 once more. May you endow us with the Gift of the Vampires?”

“I understand. But the vampirification process can only be conducted on those who have the human bloodlines .”

“Then, there’s no problem with that. Although it may be of a far relation, it is said that the wife of the progenitor was a human and thus there should be traces of the human bloodline in the fire dragon race.”

“Then, let’s get started with the preparations. It will take some time for the blood to intermingle and bind. So time is precious.”

Saying so, Leticia stood to leave.

And having heard their conversation, Asuka became painfully aware for the first time.

*(It was the same for all of them. Everyone was placing a lot at stake just to enter the fray.....)*

*Then what about herself, Kudou Asuka? Would she be able to obtain a similar determination if she exhausted all the reasons for her to participate in the battle?*

## **Part 4**

----- The airborne castle. Second VIP room.

“..... It’s~~~~~so slow.”

Kasukabe Yō was feeling lonely as she sat on her wheelchair with her face pouted in a little tantrum.

Besides herself, there was no one else currently in the room so there was no one to talk to pass the time. if we were to list the things that she could do vent out her boredom, it would be the simple play of making “Clack Clack” noises with her wheelchair wheels. that was the only interesting thing that she could think off at the moment.

No, that's not the real issue here. The problem wasn't really about that boredom.

It has been over a few hours since she handed over her 「Genome Tree」 to Croix. She also intended to talk to Croix to find out about Izayoi, Asuka, and Kuro Usagi's conditions. However, Croix had not returned since then. In the end, Yō could only play with her wheelchair making "clack clack" noises to pass the hours in boredom and ironically feeling frustrated with the fact that she was finding amusement in her little made-up game.

No, the problem did not lie there either.

*(Thanks to not leaving the room, I was not informed as to when the strategy meeting starts. There's also no spare time for eating meals. Also no one is even coming over to visit..)*

Clack. Clack. Clack. After many years, once again she found herself sitting on a wheelchair while making it move back and forth for the sounds.

She was considering the thought of simply going out with her wheelchair to wander around in search of Croix. However, the possibility of getting herself lost within the multitude of corridors made her drop this train of thought.

Just as she thought that there's nothing else to do but to continue clacking around, Yō finally felt the presence of people on the other side of the room's door.

“..... that's all for the details. But don't be too careless. We are basing the estimations from your current mobility so the possibility of a complete victory is not entirely lost.”

“Yeah, yeah Shinigami, I've gotten it the first time, so you needn't repeat those lines like a broken record.”

An old man's voice that had a suspicious quality to the tone and another voice that was starting to take on a familiar tone.

Yō immediately turned her wheelchair to charge out into the corridor.

“Izayoi!? Are you alright?”

Bang! Went the door as Yō let herself out of the room in a rush.

Izayoi had a look of slight surprise on his face but he soon recovered with a usual loud laugh while giving a nod of his head.

“Yo! You look fine as well..... or maybe not. You really can't walk now?”

Izayoi's smiling face turned serious as he expressed his concern. And it was evident that Izayoi had heard of Yō's current condition from Croix.

On the other hand, Yō who was gazed by Izayoi's slightly worried eyes, mustered her voice to reply in a tone that was as energetic as her usual self.

“It’s fine. I just need my 「Genome Tree」 to return to normal. Then I will be able to stand in battle with everyone this time. ..... Am I right, Croix-san?”

“Yes, of course. And as promised, I will return the 「Genome Tree」 to you. But, before that, I’ll have to ask you about some matters, is that alright?”

“.....sure.”

“Really? Then I will just be frank about this. I’m sure that you’ve heard of the 「Genome Tree」 and its connection to your parents..... then, regarding the type of Gift that it is crafted with, I’m sure that you would also have noticed something about it by now, am I right?”

Kasukabe gave a slight nod in response to Croix’s words.

It is said that the 「Genome Tree」 is a Gift created to defeat Demon Lords, and it simultaneously acted as the Gift that denies the existence of the theory championed by the creationists. And among the three problem children, Yō Kasukabe, who came from the furthest future, had some speculations of her own on the techniques that would be closest to this Gift.

“..... I get it somewhat because in my time period, the general idea is that the theory of creationism and evolution exists at the same time.”

“I see. So that’s the case..... Then, I have another question for you. In your world, ---- no , I mean in your time, were there any Gryphons?”

“Nn Mhm, but thinking about it logically, it might be possible for them to create man-made gryphons. Although international laws would have forbidden it, that sort of technique would be possible with the technology of our time.”

“..... I see. I get it now. All thanks to you, my years of pondering are finally quenched by your answers. The era that you come from is truly similar to the other time periods but yet different for it deviates largely from the end point of the time stream. Perhaps, it might even be considered as a world that works as an exception. Moreover, I believe that the series of events that I’ve experienced in the outside world might not even exist in the time stream that you belong to. And although it might be a coincidence, the philosophical perspective and techniques of your time is truly unique and apart from all the other observable time streams that I’ve seen. So, it’s truly a pity---“

“Oi!”

Swish! Izayoi lifted his hand to take a swipe at Croix’s bowler hat.

Being unusually serious in his conversation then, Croix was surprised by the sudden attack and he blinked stupidly for a moment before staring accusingly at Izayoi.

“.....is something the matter, Izayoi-chan.”

“Is something the matter my foot! Although I can deduce a little from that rant, but please bother enough to put it in a way that I can grasp, okay?”

Izayoi stood at with arms akimbo as he spoke in irritation.

However, Croix who adjusted his bowler hat, only looked away with a thoughtful expression before shaking his head.

“Well, it’s still not the time to tell you about this. But I did promise to have the talk you wanted after the fight with Azi Dahaka right?”

“Hmph. What’s up with this kind of person who brings the topic up but brushes it aside when asked to clarify his own words.”

“You are right about that. But please understand that this is a question that has bugged me for several hundreds of years too. So I do promise to spill all that I know to you people after you guys are successful in defeating Azi Dahaka.”

In the end, the conversation stopped there.

However, if the Demon Lord Azi Dahaka embodies the 「Eschatology of the world」, one would then be suspicious about the existence of Kasukabe Yō. This is because from the few points that she had mentioned about her background even if it lacked details, one would be able to deduce that she was summoned from the distant future.

And if she came from a distant future that has avoided the end of the world, that would give an inkling into the reason for the survival and a key to figuring out the truth behind the spiritual source of Azi Dahaka.

*(But there isn't time to spend on pondering over such details for now. Although the causation of Azi Dahaka might be closely related to what they just discussed, Azi Dahaka isn't an opponent who can be defeated just by wits alone.)*

Izayoi got hold of himself and focused on the priorities once more. Although he might have been heavily injured before the fight then, his opponent had still left him hapless in their one on one duel. Stray thoughts of these sort would only serve to hamper his movements and invite a counter from the enemy. Therefore, Izayoi chose to shut his mouth and lean on the wall for now.

Just as Croix took out the 「Genome Tree」, voices that were familiar were echoing down the corridors.

“You, You shouldn’t be up yet, Jack-san! Your wounds are too severe to rejoin the front lines!”

“.....Oh, this? It’s no problem at all. Because my body is immortal after all. Lily-ojou-chan should hurry up and take care of the other wounded instead.”

Having noted the familiarity of the voices, the trio exchanged glances before heading briskly towards the adjacent corridor.

And it was there that they saw Jack with his body swathed in bandages and leaning on the wall while facing the fox girl Lily who was coercing him to rest.

It was evident enough what the duo were arguing about along the corridors and no questions were needed to further clarify their speculations.

Interrupting their commotion, Izayoi scratched his head while walking towards Jack with his usual smile.

“Yo, Jack. Thanks for the help that was a little on the side of being late. It’s the first time that I’ve seen you in your human form, but it seems to be more

troublesome than your pumpkin form huh? If you do plan to quietly return to the sick bay, I'm willing to lend you a shoulder, you know?"

".....Izayoi-dono. You are already up? And here I was thinking that your injuries looked worse than mine when I last saw you."

"Ah, don't worry about me. As you can see, I'm alive and well. It's said that one's daily actions are really important because this is all the work of the Unicorn Horn that was given to us during the course of our adventures. It turns out to be a really great Gift that is able to heal my injuries of even that extent. However, it's a pity that it's only usable for a person."

And Izayoi completed his story before Jack could ask the questions.

So Jack, whose unasked questions had been answered, could only shake his head with a wry smile.

"Is that so?..... I would also like to rest in the sick bay for a while, but it really is despicable of me to face my back to the enemy when I'm one of the Hosts."

"Your opponent would never care for those sort of naïve thoughts. ..... Mah, if I were to speak my mind, I'm truly interested in your Game---- in fact, it's to the point where my heart quivers with curiosity and I would salivate in

anticipation. However, we can't afford to lose you in this place now, so please leave it to us to handle the rest.”

Izayoi said flatly and he was unusually honest about his words.

After all, if we were to talk about the search for the truth behind the mysterious killer whose identity is unknown to all---Jack the Ripper]’s Game to search for his true identity, Izayoi would never say no to that challenge. In fact, he would be excited and perhaps even to the extent of trying to make an enemy out of Jack if it weren’t for the Alliance forged between their Communities.

But putting aside that curiosity, it would really be a waste to lose Jack.

And that was a high praise coming from a self-proclaimed hedonist.

Waiting at the side, Yō also wheeled herself over to coax Jack.

“Jack, it’s just as Izayoi says. If you die now, many children would be sad about your passing. The current you is Jack the clown and not Jack the mass murderer.”

「Jack o’ lantern」.

The most welcomed character in the Halloween festival and the most loved monster by the kids. His fans were not limited to his own Community and even Asuka was one of them.

If he were to die, many kids would cry for his loss.

“Jack-san.....”

Lily held Jack’s hand as she coaxed him to return to the room.

Getting coaxed in three different ways by three different individuals, Jack closed his eyes while hanging his head dejectedly.

Then, Jack broke out in a self-mocking laughter.

“..... Hoho. Jack the clown, is it? If that’s the real me, it would be all so good.”

“Aye?”

“Izayoi-dono, Kasukabe-chan, and Lily-chan, I’ve killed before. Be it young boys, girls and kids, I’ve killed them all. Not for a greater goal but to sate my own desires for achieving art in murders.”

“.....!?”

“The me of those days would take a young child who was screaming for his daddy and mummy and I would chop off his arm to form an arch while

attaching it to a decapitated head with its expression frozen at its moment of death to form a lantern. The last agonizing screams before their deaths would be my lullaby before my sleep and that is the existence that is the source of the monster named “Jack” before his reincarnation..... Even after knowing all that, could you still call me a clown?”

The trio were stumped for words as the ghastly scene painted by his descriptions made it impossible to find praises or compliments to overshadow his deeds. However, the Jack that he described was entirely impossible to picture out from his recent actions in the battles that they had.

During the battle against Leticia whose form was demonised to attack 「Underwood」 , Jack had been the first to protect the kids in the airborne castle.

When Sandora had fallen into the hands of Demon Lord of Confusion, Jack’s anger had also been roused in the battle that ensued.

The one who protected and loved the kids and the one who is loved and cared for by them in turn, this pumpkin monster had his spiritual source stemming from a mass murderer of children. And that was something even Izayoi did not expect.

Croix pressed his bowler hat as he spoke.

“..... I see. It has been passed down in folklores that the legend of ‘Jack o’ lantern’ is a person who has been through many reincarnations. And among them all is a commonality of “Jack being a villain who is beyond salvation”. After all, it was the same for his second chance. The Jack who cried to plead for a second chance at turning a new leaf for his next life, continued to be tainted with his evil ways in his second life.”

“That’s right. My real identity is “Jack the Ripper” who plunged London into fear. I’m unable to wash off my bloodstained past.” Jack stared at his bandaged hands before covering his face in anguish.

He, who had experienced the warmth of humans’ innards, was now leaning on a wall for support as he trembled from his emotional breakdown.

“In his rage of having been lied to by a person like me, Saint Peter then sentenced me to be thrown into a void that left me in a state of neither life nor death. Without light or darkness and it was a void world that served as a prison for me.”

“.....”

“And within that hell devoid of all things, I was not even allowed to take my own life. I was left there for such a long time that it felt as if I was melding and assimilating with the void zone. It was then that a young girl appeared to

gift me a small flame. That was the young demon who happened to be..... My master. Willa The Ignis Fatuus, a semi-celestial spirit who fell from candidacy.”<sup>[3]</sup>

A young girl who manifested from the breath of the Earth to be the embodiment of the demon who holds sway over life and death.

Although her spiritual power may not be of the level similar to the Great Sage who Unifies Heaven who was born from the depths of the planet’s abyss, it was an undeniable fact that she was a child created by the planet.

“Begging the young demon who just happened to be without much understanding of her surroundings, I managed to leave the hell of emptiness to get back to the surface. By then, the layers of my soul had already been weathered away by my experience in the void zone. And it was then that watching the smile of that innocent baby, Willa..... that I finally understood the enormity of what I had done in the past!!!”

Having spent sufficient time in the void to lose the outer layers of his soul, Jack’s insanity had been stripped with time’s passing. And if we were to convert the time spent into the concept of time in human sense, it would be a period that is close to being an infinite amount of time. Therefore, this led

Jack into developing a third person persona that allowed himself to introspect his deeds during and before his imprisonment.

To introspect on the ‘him’ who had the same face as a certain someone. He who was drenched in the showers of blood, taking delight in helping them draw their last breaths and from their looks of despair.

However, what awaited the reformed him was a hell that was far worse than the void prison that he had escaped from.

It was the conscience that he had gained from the erasure of his insanity that was able to comprehend the enormity of his crimes. He understood that he would never be able to make up for his sins even if he forsook his life.

“When I took on my human form for the battle..... I was shown a dream. A dream of my past self, killing Willa, Aisha and Asuka and playing with their corpses to desecrate them further.....!!!”

Perhaps, the dream is a punishment given to him by Saint Peter to bring the persona that revelled in its evil insanity to be judged before the kinder self that had awoken from its insanity.

And there couldn’t be anything else that would be able to top that sort of torture to the current Jack.

“My sins are so heavy that it would never be paid in full even if I were to offer my life as the price. So I swore to myself then to become a wandering spirit..... and offer my whole life span to pay for my sins. That is the vow I had with Willa when she handed me the pumpkin mask. Putting on the Pumpkin body and throwing away the worn tattered rag, I then gave a smile that would be seen and remembered by thousands as a way to atone for my sins of having caused thousands of regretful screams. And if there are people who would obstruct our way..... I swore to transform my entire existence into a weapon to take down enemy.”

Jack lifted his head to watch the others as a steely determination backed by an abundance of emotions was reflected in his eyes.

And thus no one coaxed him to rest any further. No, that's not it. It was the situation that everyone understood that no words would be able to change his mind even if they wanted to get him to rest. For it would not be to no avail to try and change the mind of a man who swore to devote his all to protect the smiles of the children.

As a result, Kasukabe Yō had chosen to look down as she found herself at a loss for words to say; Baron Croix chose to press down his bowler hat; and Lily was wagging her two tails while having a pale look on her face.

Only one person..... Sakamaki Izayoi, continued to look at Jack straight in the eye without any expression on his face.

“----”

And having heard of Jack's past, Izayoi moved over to place Jack's arm over his shoulder while maintaining his straight look.

It wasn't that Izayoi is not an expressive person. But it was impossible to guess his thoughts from his current expression. Perhaps it was rage? Contempt? Or even other types of emotions? Who knows? However, Izayoi who lent his shoulder to Jack, stood his ground for a moment.....and suddenly, seeming to have remembered something, Izayoi spoke in a low voice.

“.....Jack”

“Mhm.”

“I, respect you.”

---Wha? Jack let out a small surprised gasp.

Jack widened his eyes as he started to doubt if Izayoi had heard his story correctly.

It was plain to see that Izayoi's words were really unexpected.

“Izayoi-dono.....that’s”

“Don’t get me wrong. If it were the old you from before, I would immediately erase your existence, Jack. Regarding the crimes that you have committed and the punishment you received, I have not a shred of sympathy for that.”

In Izayoi’s eyes, young boys and girls were part of the vulnerable population in a society. They who had not stabilized their concepts of the world, did not deserve to carry the burden of choosing between the good and the bad. There is not a need to use words to chide such an individual who would mercilessly slaughter hapless children.

*Such an individual would only deserve the punch that could shake the stars to rain down harshly upon their body.*

Therefore, the respect that Izayoi referred to would be for his appearance while seeking to repent and pay for his sins.

“What we know of as the Human race is actually a breed of creatures that tend to favour themselves in the decision making process. To continue fighting to pay for your sins when it is evidently impossible to clear that debt, is something that isn’t possible for most people. In addition to that, your case would be a constant nightmare when you continue to stay in that battle state.”

A determination to continue the battle to protect children that would mean the same transformation into his murderous appearance for every battle that a strong foe appears. And that would be accompanied by his nightmares.

----For the sake of giving the children a future and a blessed life.

It did not matter that he would have to face his past once more to experience the pains that would have buckled anyone's knees. It was this sort of determination of facing one's sins and working to pay the debt that Izayoi referred to as the radiance that caught his eye.

"Jack, I understand your determination. But no one will have an issue with this if you were to leave the rest to me from here on."

"..... Is that okay?"

"Ahh, but if there's an opening for you to target that lizard's head, please do so. After all, the opponent is a godly being named "Absolute Evil" and hitting him might just reduce your nightmarish punishment right?"

Izayoi laughed as he cracked the joke in a light-hearted tone.

It was then that Jack's expression softened as he used the same light-hearted tone to reply.

“Yahoho..... Mhm, sounds good. I also do not want to be shackled down by that old pervert all the time. It would be for the best if I can serve my time completely and break away from any relations with him.”

“..... he’s an old pervert?”

“Mhm. After all, the body that was given to me during my reincarnation..... No, I guess I will just leave it at that.”

Jack’s eyes were distant and it seemed like he was remembering some really bad memories.

However, their situation was far from optimistic.

Kasukabe Yō called out to Croix and stretched her right hand out to him.

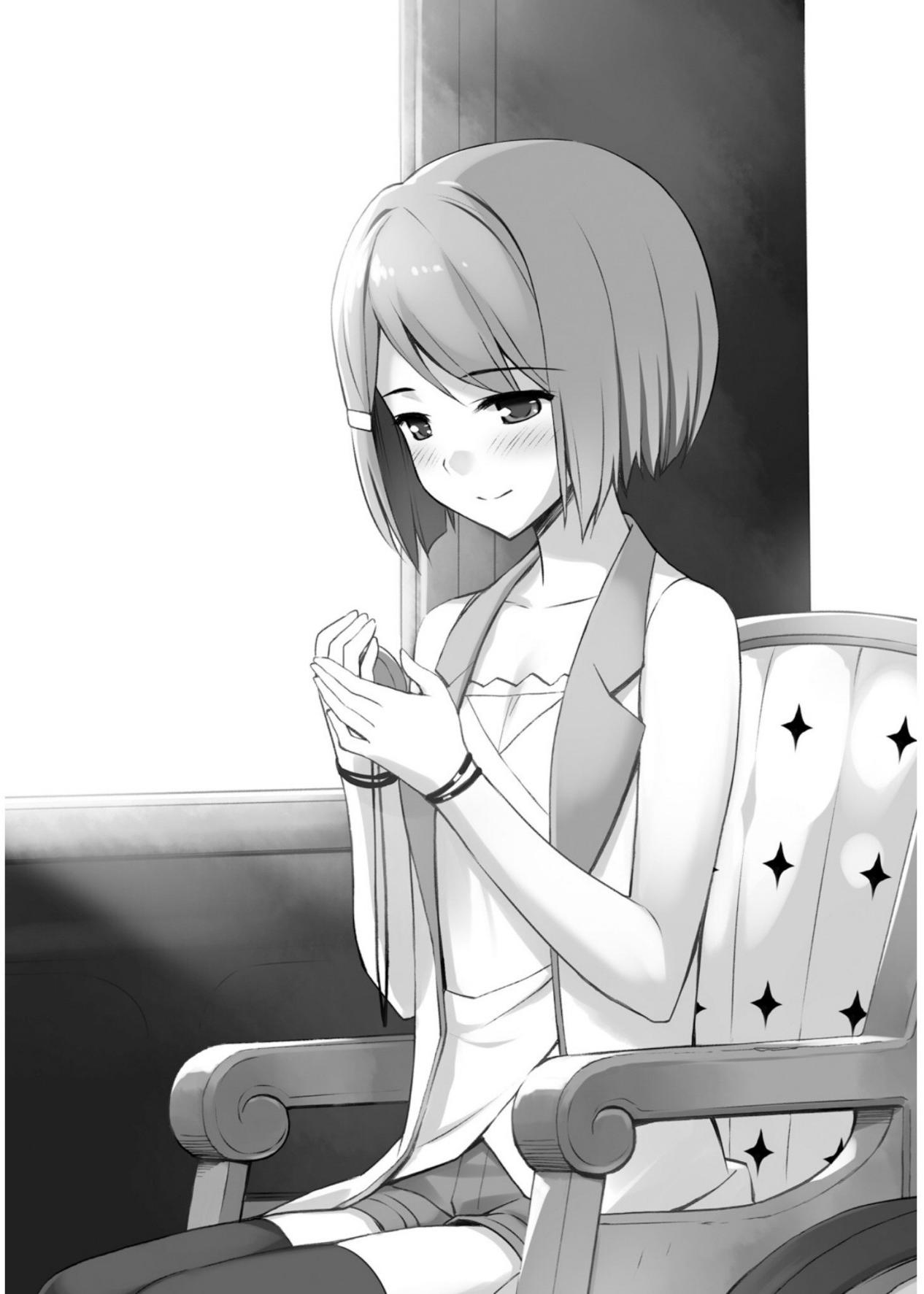
“Everyone’s joining the battle with their various convictions. It’s just not possible for me to be the only one who sits out on the battle.”

“..... you are right about that. We will be needing the the 「Genome Tree」 ’s power in the upcoming battle.”

And saying so, Croix took out the 「Genome Tree」 from his right breast pocket to hand it to Yō.

The feeling of the 「Genome Tree」 in her hands filled her up with the sensation of its spiritual power. Clutching the necklace tightly, Yō then directed the strength to her immobile legs.

Simultaneously as she felt the boost in strength across her entire body, Yō could also tell that there was a familiar warmth in her heart as she used the power.



“.....is that so. It was dad who repaired the 「Genome Tree」 right?”  
“Eh, that’s.....!”

“It’s alright. I understand. After all, it is this sort of situation and there should be things that Dad needs to do. So, I’ll just have to concentrate on my part of the fight.”

Yō rested the Genome Tree on her chest.

Knowing that her father was near and fighting for the same goal, just knowing that was able to give Yō such a happy smile.

And seeing that smile, Baron Croix quietly made a vow.

*After the end of this battle..... even if I need to tie a rope around that neck of his, I will also drag that coward of a father to face his daughter.*

## **Notes and References:**

1. [magrefnotes: Just noticed that 翳属 is not entirely a herald. It connotes a closer, more intimate bloodline /family relation similar to descendants. For simplicity sake, I will just continue using herald.]
2. [magrefnotes: atavism- the throwback of an organism to have a manifestation of a trait or character typical of an ancestral form usually due to genetic recombination (rephrased a little from Merriam Webster)]
3. [magrefnotes: As from translator HongLian: Due to the distinction mentioned in volume 3 on the difference between “born” and “happened”, we will retain the original word of happened to stick to the idea of the author]

## Interlude 2

——Airborne Citadel, terrace on the top floor.

Predawn winds blew, shaking the banner that was put up at the top of the castle. In just one more hour, the sun would rise on the horizon, marking the end of night.

At the time of summoning, there were just three community banners, but now it's different.

Flags of all the communities taking part in the battle, including the Azure flames of 「Will-O-Wisp」 and flame dragon of 「Salamandra」 were bravely fluttering.

This scene was probably also visible to Azi Dakaha who was below.

The scene showcased the tens of banners full of determination to oppose the strongest God killer. In short, it was a magnificent view. This had the effect of further raising their fame.

Surely, It would be appropriate to call it a once in a lifetime beautiful scene.

And yet, to that battle line of banners.....just one flag was missing.

"....."

Standing alone on the terrace of the top floor, Kuro Usagi was looking at the banners.

Having a bit of an uncharacteristically lonely expression, she sighed and leaned on the railing.

".....Even though we are going to have a decisive battle of life and death, there is no flag of encouragement. This really isn't what it should be. Everyone, is it really okay to have it like that?"

Kuro Usagi turned her gaze towards the entrance of the terrace.

Sakamaki Izayoi, Kudou Asuka, and Kasukabe Yo nodded with different facial expressions.

"We are the No Name community after all. Even if we risk our lives on the main stage, we will hardly go down in history."

"Yes. There is a frustrating feeling of not being able to demonstrate our will of participation in the battle on such a large scene, but....."

".....The current battle is not a battle with the intention of making a name."

The battle is not merely for gaining honor. It's a battle to accomplish what has to be accomplished and to defeat what has to be defeated.

「Last Embryo」——Resurrected Demon Lord Azi Dakaha, the enemy that doesn't wish to live under the same sky as his enemy, and named himself a calamity that befalls the whole world.

Lives, cities, civilizations, prosperities, order, crime, social ills.

The Demon Lord that bares his fangs at the justice of this world and swallows up the ugly hell with a violent hell.

It's a "Natural Calamity" that intends to befall on everything on this world without exception, just like a tempest, a tsunami, and a thunderstorm.

"Enemy of the world.....huh? It really is quite an opponent, but we will handle it together just like we always have. After all, the current 「No Names」 repaired their connections for the sake of defeating the Demon Lords."

"But even if you say that, the frustration won't go away. If we at least managed to create an alliance flag, the result wouldn't be something like this."

"If we finished making the alliance, this would have been a debut battle. Even that lizard Demon Lord-sama can't read the atmosphere."

The three problem children agreed and nodded at the same time. If this were the usual situation, Kuro Usagi would yell "Is this the time to be fooling around, you Bakas!" and hit them with her Harisen. But at that moment, Kuro Usagi was looking at the three problem children while recalling the conclusion that Alma arrived at.

『——I think Kudou Asuka is a descendant of the former "No Names" that were thrown out into another world』

Those words of Almathea filled her calm character with an unimaginable amount of passion.

Almathea's theory goes like this:

In the original timeline, the large conglomerate 「Kudou Zaibatsu」 didn't exist. According to Asuka, her family seemed to have a long merchant history, but that is often the case with any other households. Putting it in another way with more bluntness, it could be said to be just another stone along the pavement.

But if such a household was to be assisted by the former members of the 「No Names」, the potential of the family business growing into a large organization that can even influence history would be very high.

Like the mother of Lily who is a descendant of the god Ukanomitama, or the many others who have gifts that specializes in prospering businesses. If we concluded that their blood was mixed variously and the end of World War 2 created the Atavism, then everything would make sense.

*(Izayoi-san, and Asuka san, and Yo-san.....there is no way that the three of them were summoned by coincidence.)*

Why didn't they notice this? After all, their spirits possessed the brightness that were undoubtedly inherited from the spirits of the people whom Kuro Usagi envied so much.

Of Canaria, who had the wits and foresight to lead the Community along a proper path.

Of Koumei, who supported the organization with diplomacy through befriending members of many different tribes.

And many comrades, who managed lands and other supporting facilities.

Their culmination——Capable people who followed their paths, are in fact the three problem children who came from parallel worlds.

*(Lily and the senior children might become sad.....but surely, they would understand.)*

What's done is done. And a broken bowl won't return to its original form. The old 「No Names」 can no longer be restored to the way it once was.

But even so, it's still possible to fill a new bowl with water.

Kuro Usagi held her hands to her chest and made a solid decision.

*(If we manage to safely walk away at the end of this battle.....At that time, Kuro Usagi will surely tell this to everyone.)*

She motivated herself as her Usamimi stood up.

A little time was left before the start of the final battle.

They didn't borrow the terrace just to grieve on not having a flag. It was also because of Asuka's proposal suggesting on coming there for a bit and drink tea to restore their energy.

Putting her hands on the cart with a tea on it, Kuro Usagi pridefully-

"Nekomimi!"

Shook the nekomimi side to side——

".....Nekomimi?"

"Nekomimi? Eh, what's with these flattering animal ears, are they picking a fight with these high class Usamimi? Eh, in that case I'll accept that fight as many times as necessary!" - full of such intention, she turned her gaze towards the problem children.

But there was something there that exceeded her imaginations.

"I-it suits! It really suits Izayoi-san! As Kasukabe-san would say "Super Good Job"!"

"No, that's wrong Asuka. This already went beyond "Super Good Job". At this point, it even exceeded "Giga Good Job", "Tera Good Job" and "Omega Good Job", it's the ultimate good job—— "A T · G J"!!!<sup>[1]</sup>"

"Too loud!"

Asuka held her sides while laughing and Yo was serious as usual.

Looking at them with a face dyed with surprise, was Sakamaki Izayoi,  
no——Reformed, Nekomimi Izayoi.

"W.....wha.....!?"

From the scene that exceeded her imaginations, Kuro Usagi's mind turned blank.

The Nekomimi Headphones that were summoned some time ago were worn on Izayoi's head. They were probably put on at the time of Kuro Usagi's monologue.....But the problem did not lie there.

The nekomimi Headphones on Izayoi's head perfectly suited him.

As a catalyst to his naturally unruly hair, his sharp eyes with a displeased look and his character with a slight tsundere side combined to create a chemical reaction that caused an unknown impulse to erupt from within Kuro Usagi's chest.

"Wh-why did my heart suddenly start beating so fast.....! As a representative of the Usamimis, I should be protesting about such a situation, but why is it that for some reason, Kuro Usagi's wanting to indulge in the moment and to throw aside her basic responsibilities.....!!!

Wh-What in the world is this unknown impulse.....!?"

"It's called moe, Kuro Usagi."

Moe!? M O E !!?

Little Garden Encyclopedia: Moe, it indicates a grown of the sprout that came from the earth. It's the so called new field, connected to the creation of a new world. A different view of the universe.

"H-how did this happen.....Did Kuro Usagi finally achieve such enlightenment that I gained my own view of the universe.....!!! But how cynical that the motive of this was the Nekomimi from the rivaling genre.....!!! Such humiliation.....!!!"

"——。 If you get it, then return from the parallel world at once you girls."

Izayoi sighed as if amazed. While he understood that as of late he was closing in little by little towards the danger of becoming the straightman to a tsukkomi, he showed a self-mocking smile as he thought that the current him wasn't that bad a thing as well.

"It wouldn't be a bad thing if such foolish banters could continue forever," Izayoi carried such thoughts that drifted across his mind that his past self would never have considered before.

If he could wish for one thing.....It would not be bad to wish for days like this to continue even after the battle.

**Notes and References:**

1. In japanese, it's Arutimetto Guddo Jobu, so it became AT GJ

## **Chapter 3**

### **Part 1**

——And the long night ended.

A dry wind blew over the deserted town full of spires. As the daybreak got near, the wind got stronger due to the difference of temperature between the day and night. The bright light that spilled from the moon gradually died down.

As the time of dawn came, the mist that followed suit enveloped the town. The field of vision was obstructed with the darkness spread in front.

The three headed dragon uncoiled his three heads and prepared for battle while still being on all fours. Although there were no signs of the enemies in sight, he sensed that the battle was about to start.

By all rights, if he were to act rashly, he could mow down the Hosts while blowing off this fog along with the town, but the game rules prohibited fighting outside of the designated location.

In other words, the first move should be done by the Hosts.

And if the Hosts were planning to attack, now is the perfect time.

There was no meaning in challenging the three headed dragon to a fight during the night time since he could clearly see in darkness.

They might be able to succeed in a surprise attack if they were to commence the attack at the time of dawn when the surrounding is shrouded in fog. But for that to happen, a spy that could locate the accurate location of Azi Dakaha is necessary.

Azi Dakaha's field of vision was obstructed by the fog, but in turn, this also goes for the hosts.

Without a doubt, the responsibility of spying is shouldered by "Laplace's Demon". If it's those girls who have incredible espionage abilities, they could instantly discover Azi Dakaha's whereabouts.

But since the main body of the demon is currently sealed, for the sake of information gathering, releasing a large number of offsprings——Imps was necessary.

The moment the three heads and six eyes senses their presence, he will seize and crush them.

If he manages to do that, then their chances would be tied. At that moment, the player side would certainly be a step closer to winning.

The three headed dragon prepared his limbs like an animal and lied in wait for the opponent.

The fog became increasingly dense until it was even able to block the morning sunlight.

With this, even the vision of the three headed dragon who had the best eyesight was obstructed. And a human's recognizing abilities would hardly distinguish the enemy's figure from a building.

Taking a large breath, the humidity of the mist entangled in his throat. There would be no better circumstances for making a surprise attack than now.

The three heads were constantly looking at every direction, with the snake eyes carrying a heat detection organ——The infrared organ. If a heat source were to appear, the three headed dragon will immediately bite and rip it to pieces with his fangs.

Massive bombarding started from an unexpected direction.

『——!?』

From the sky far above, high-explosive projectiles were shot down at the three headed dragon. Rather than iron shells, it was from the mouth of fire dragons. From those highly explosive projectiles, the nearby spires were smashed to bits and blown off in four directions.

The three headed dragon looked at the sky, but wasn't able to clearly grasp the images of the enemies.

While closely avoiding the unending flame projectiles, the three headed dragon quizzically narrowed his eyes.

*(It would be difficult to succeed in such surprise attacks from the sky without grasping the exact location of the target. Did they know my location beforehand?)*

Amidst the torrent of flames, the three headed dragon tilted his head while thinking about how they managed to do it.

The accuracy of enemy's projectiles was extremely high. The Hosts were executing an attack with pinpoint accuracy in this fog. Even while he's running, the attacks were either hitting him or falling near, and that meant that there was someone who was continuously monitoring him even at this moment.

There were no signs of pursuers in sight.

—That already went beyond the limit of skills. It's obvious that Azi Dakaha's pursuer was using some sort of Gift.

*(The initiation of the Game was snatched away huh? Oh well. There are many other ways)*

He ran through the bombardment and the scattered debris.

Jumping in the sky seemed like a bad idea. He might be take down some of them, but if he were to make an appearance, he would most likely be bathed in a concentrated fire from below.

Even though receiving a few hundred flame dragon's fireballs would not be a problem, making an appearance when not knowing what kind of trump card the opponent has up their sleeves would only be a fool's errand.

*(The ones dropping projectiles are just decoys. They would need good luck to be able to lure me out. The aim of the Hosts is to take the initiative to change the current state of affairs)*

And their aim is going smoothly so far.

The fog gave the Hosts an advantage beyond expectations.

While the three headed dragon was firmly waiting for a chance to counterattack, he was unaware of the presence of a mysterious guardian, let alone being able to notice it.

—There's no doubt. There is an excellent Game Maker among the side of Hosts.

In that case, the game maker who is a key figure needs to be taken down first, then the pursuer.

The three headed dragon smiled wryly and widened his ruby eyes to observe the surroundings.

This pursuer is most likely using some kind of gift that clings to the three headed dragon. He's not showing any signs, nor is he making any sounds, and

even passed through the Infrared detection. As vast as Little Garden can be, the holders of such strong Gifts could only be counted on one hand.

The three headed dragon saw through the Hermit's Gift with the gift he himself possessed.

*(Most likely, the opponent's Gift is invisibility or from the system of permeation. But no matter what kind of Gift it is, it should not pass through the heat vision. The community, having a gift to cut off the sound and heat and also able to stand in my way is——)*

The three headed dragon hastened his thinking.

Being the incarnation of humanity's evil, he is bestowed the entire knowledge of humanity. Because there doesn't exist a technology in this world that doesn't have even used a bit of evil.

All the "Techniques" which changed the shape at times in history of black magic, alchemy, science and others, are stored inside those three heads.

The three headed dragon made use of the vast knowledge that was said to be equal to a thousand magics to search for a solution.

Finishing the search, he suddenly stopped and addressed the hidden pursuer.

"——Mhm. But there is no need to search. There is only one gift which can perfectly fulfill the conditions to this degree. Isn't that right, Greek hero!"

".....!?"

A small shriek leaked from the right. It seemed that the gift couldn't conceal the voice of the user. The three headed dragon who was previously observing three directions, opened it's giant jaw and smiled. But that laugh was not directed at the mistake of the pursuer. Rather, it was quite the opposite.

It was because the pursuer was monitoring the three headed dragon from merely five meters away.

Just how many would risk getting this close to the Demon Lord even if their body was invisible. What an extraordinary spirit.

Staring with all 6 six eyes from his three heads, the three headed dragon snorted in provocation.

"So what? Do you want to obtain my neck? If it's your sickle——The celestial spirit killing Harpe, Then it might just be able to do it. You came this close with that in mind, right?"

Azi Dakaha raised his middle neck and started talking.

The pursuer who had his identity completely exposed was not moving just like a frog in front of a snake's glare. No, he couldn't move.

The Gift of the pursuer simply made him invisible but it didn't make him permeable. If he moved in this mist, the atmosphere would change and it will indirectly expose his location.

Kasukabe Yo already saw through it once with that method, and doing that in current circumstances is even easier.

Running is impossible. No courage to fight. Not even able to move.

In that situation, he——The head of 「Perseus」, Laius furiously yelled.

「——They are too slow! These No Names and the others!!!」

Angry roar. From the shadow of debris, three figures jumped out as if shooting.

Having directed his attention to the heavy fog and the pursuer, the three headed dragon reacted just a bit late.

The three headed dragon roughly grasped the shape of the town, but from the bombardment, its shape was changed and the shadow of crumbled bricks became a blind spot.

And it was not because the fire dragons were launching their aerial assault at random..

Everything was calculated to bring him to the location where the main force could fight.

"Three headed dragon, prepare yourself!"

Shouted Kasukabe Yo, Faceless and Jack.

Each of them pierced the three headed dragon with the sharp weapons that they held in hands. The three headed dragon's fresh blood spilled at the same time from various places on his right arm and left leg.

"An Ambush?——Clever!!!"

The wings of the dragon's shadow shook violently like a tempest.

This looked as if the raging dragon waved his tail. The shadow blade attacked swinging like a whip and sent the building flying with just a touch.

Their bodies would be smashed with just one hit.

Jack avoided the attack with his dagger and fast footwork, Faceless used a special move that astonished even Kouryuu.

But unlike the two, Kasukabe Yo didn't have a protruding weapon.

Just the touch of three headed dragon's blow would be fatal. Sensing the danger, She changed the 「Genome Tree」 to the mythical beast 「Marchosias」 and faced it. Even though she lost in terms of strength, the Gift of 「Marchosias」 granted the unique power that could respond even to teleportation surprise attacks.

Demon Lord Maxwell guessed that the Gift of 「Marchosias」 bestowed 「Clairvoyance」, but his guess was a little bit off. What this gift actually

shows is ‘The most correct future for the situation in front of one's eyes’——In other words, it is an irregular Gift that provides answers to the riddles.

It's not 「Clairvoyance」 , It's ‘Realization of a Desired Future’. This gift will provide the answer even if the user is unaware of the situation.

Within the tempest of the dragon's shadow that couldn't be followed with one's eyesight, it showed a route for avoiding it.

Repelling the unavoidable attacks with leg armor, she escaped outside of the attack range and shouted towards everyone in that place.

"The shedding of blood was a success! Everyone take distance!"

Everyone including Laius spread out and withdrew from that place.

Without a moment's delay, the three headed dragon tried to deal the final blow.

But the three headed dragon's pursuit was stopped by the lightning that shined in the sky.

"Nu.....!!?"

Ramified lightning pierced the three headed dragon. In the midst of intense lightning and light, only a voice of anguish leaked out. While burning in the

bright light, the three headed dragon realized the spirit status of the lightning that attacked him.

"This divine lightning.....Could it be, Indra's.....?!!"

But, he doubted in his mind that he would appear at this time. He surely understands it well. Because no matter how high his Divine Spirit is, even if it was omnipotent, he still won't be able to bring down Azi Dakaha. And there is a reason for that.

Even though Indra knew it was a stupid idea, to still challenge the final trial is a foolish act. But if he was not such a fool, he would not be entrusted with the the heavenly army, deterrence force that consists of the 12 Devas.

*(Soon enough, offshoots would be born from my blood. Were they confirming this fact?)*

And then, he remembered the words Kasukabe Yo shouted at the moment of evacuation:

——"The shedding of blood was a success! Everyone take distance!"

The three headed dragon realized that he ended up falling behind by one move and clicked his tongue.

It's impossible to infinitely create divine level offshoots. Because they are bestowed a divine status that's taken from the body of three headed dragon possessing mass that's equal to a continent.

Even if all the clones were used up, it would not affect his battle ability, but instead it would expose a fatal weakness.

Normally, the three headed dragon would've immediately noticed this, but wavering whether to confirm the presence of Indra——The Divine Spirit, that was born from same pus of evil or not, delayed his next move.

*(If their objective is to make me spit out the offshoots, then the next move is clear——)*

"——Army, prepare for annihilation!!!"

Together with the sound of a bell, a cold voice reverberated in the sky. And in the next moment, the sky above the three headed dragon was covered with a rain of explosives comparable to a nuclear heat.

So it came after all, huh? - thinking that, the three headed dragon put himself on guard.

Creation of offshoots from surprise attacks immediately followed by an annihilation with high firepower.

That was the strategy the Hosts chose.

Hit and run tactics created by the game maker to preserve the main force.

"Ataaaaaaack——!!!"

Thousands of fire dragons carrying pseudo divinity simultaneously released spirit flames. He tried to prevent the attacks by using the Dragon's shadow but the freshly born two-headed dragons didn't have the time to handle it.

Twin-headed dragons that created their bodies by eating the debris were annihilated in the blink of an eye.

After the scattered rain of explosives, only Azi Dakaha was left uninjured.

Confirming the situation on the ground with Lapko II from above, Kudou Asuka unintentionally twitched her lips.

".....Unbelievable. All that shooting and not a single wound"

"Then again, it's expected from such a monster. Against a Zoroastrian Demon Lord, that degree of flames don't stand a chance. Diminishing the offshoots alone is already sufficient."

"Success! Amazing results! Asuka is amazing!"

Earth fairy Mel happily shouted from the top of Asuka's head.

Asuka couldn't send her to the citadel alone so she took her along, but she was surprised when she decided to participate in the war.

Asuka worriedly stroked Merun and warned:

"Merun. Everything is hectic now, so restrain yourself"

"I got it! I will protect Asuka!"

She jumped and shook the pointy hat.

while riding on the fire dragon's back, Asuka gave the next instructions.

"The first part of the plan was a success. Threaten him with projectiles and please wait for the movements on the grounds."

"Understood!"

"Vampirified members of 「Salamandra」, if possible, further increase the offence. Let's begin to steadily shave off the enemy war power!"

The Fire dragons raised a war cry. Though not understanding their words, Asuka still understood the situation from Laplace's interpretation.

*(But if possible.....I pray that their turn wouldn't come.....)*

Not all the fire dragons were vampirified.

There were many that volunteered but only the old dragons, the fire dragons who already had children and their boss Mandra were the only ones vampirified.

But still, taboo is a taboo.

The spirits of 「Salamandra」 are high, but even if they gain victory in this battle, their trials won't end at that.

For that reason, Asuka prayed that at least this battle would go an even bit peacefully for them.

## Part 2

——Town of London, surface.

Meanwhile, Kasukabe Yo and the others.

"Daaaaaaaaagh!!! Shit, shit, shit, I thought I would die, Goddamnit!!! - I'm never doing something this dangerous ever again you bastards!!!"

Laius hit the helmet where the divinity of Hades dwelled and started ranting. Although he was talking strongly about it, his knees were shaking. But, it couldn't be helped.

It was not a metaphor, he was really close to dying.

Depending on the mood of the three headed dragon, his head could've flown from his shoulders and that wasn't funny. To have returned alive from that situation couldn't be described any way other than the fact that this fellow possessed great luck.

"Shit.....!!! It's all Laplace's fault that this happened! That chibi's talks——

"I cant see" "Please get even closer" "Are you a chicken?"

"I can't understand how Greek Gods tolerate you. Perseus is a chicken."

"Yes yes, you can do it if you try right?" "I'll shout now" "Just 10cm x 10cm more"

"If you approach just one step closer, you'll be a hero! Go for it! Excellent son of Perseus!"

——If she didn't trick me with such cajolery, it wouldn't have become like this.....!!!"

He frustratingly clenched his teeth from the fact that he was completely manipulated.

Seeing his favorite pupil's form, Jack sorrowfully sighed.

"Ya-ho-ho.....even though I thought Laius-kun finally showed some determination. Laius-kun who acted on emotions and was manipulated is at fault."

"Shut up you damn pumpkin!!! If you talk like that, why don't you go and try it yourself!!!"

He threw the helmet of Hades while yelling.

——Speaking of this helmet.

Even though it was receiving such a rough treatment, it was among the highest level of assassination Gifts even within the entire Little Garden. That ability could not compare to the Gifts of the same system. Even if you do something like swing a sword, there is no fear of being detected by the target. If it was combined with the Gift that distorts the surrounding space, then it will indirectly expose the whereabouts, but if you disregard that, it's an amazing gift.

After taking all that into account, Faceless raised the index finger and proposed:

"I understand. If Luilui is like that, then there is no other choice. Let me use that helmet of Hades"

"As expected from the Queen's knight! You understood quickly! But stop calling me Luilui!!!

He really is a guy who is easily pleased and easily agitated at the same time.

Faceless gave a small nod while a bit of a troubled expression floated on her face.

"But in that case, Luilui's body might be in danger. We won't have time to protect you while fighting, would that be alright?"

".....Ha?"

"That's right. Hit and run is an indispensable part of the strategy. Let me ask you just in case.....Laius-kun, can you dodge the three headed dragon's attack from a while ago and escape on your own?"

Laius' face turned pale.

Even if it's just in name, he was still a high ranking existence that descended from Zeus.

Although his physical abilities are not low, he almost never practiced in things like sword skills. It's impossible for him to defend against an attack from before with a similar move that Faceless used.

".....Then, what will you do? Will you continue to be a pursuer? Or will LuiLui be an assailant?"

".....I, am an assailant"

"Tch——If you keep continuing, I will scrape off your neck and excommunicate you, got it?"

Jack's knife suddenly touched Laius' neck.

Jack's eyes were not laughing. Right now, Jack would really do what he said.

Kasukabe Yo silently approached Laius who was covered in cold sweat as if he was at the edge of a precipitous cliff.



".....Jack. Faceless-san. It's not good to blame him that much. Though there are lots of complaints but he explained that he was tricked, but even.....Still, Luilui did his best."

After listening to Yo's quiet counsel, the two of them showed a sullen face.

That's certainly the case. The biggest key figure of this primary strategy is without a doubt, this person.

Grasping the location of that three headed dragon and maintaining a reasonable distance, Laius completed the primary objective. Not losing anyone while taking the initiative.....Was the result of his efforts, he who mustered his courage despite his rebellious personality.

This was an unthinkable action for the Laius of several months ago, when he fought with the "No names"

"On that basis, I have one more request. Luilui is certainly the best with using the Hermit's Gift for tracking the three headed dragon. If someone else attempts it and as the result the helmet gets destroyed, then the whole tactic will end up in failure. If that happens, we will have to use an even more dangerous tactic.

Of course, sooner or later it will break.

But if there ever was a safer plan even by a bit, then they should certainly follow it.

And the person in question, Laius perfectly understood this.

Making a face as if he just chewed on a bug, he showed a complicated expression while releasing a very deep..... deep, deep sigh and picked up the helmet once again.

".....Shit. Damn it. This is not worth it. The agreed reward from the beginning will not be enough, would it?"

".....Yahoho. Then, what will you do?"

"I decided. You guys seek my power. Then, I want the extra compensation in proportion to the service. If you can't promise this then....."

"I understand. I will talk to the Queen about it."

Jack and Laius widened their eyes in amazement from the proposal of Faceless. The Queen that this Queen's knight spoke of is the sole Queen that exists in Little Garden.

She held the mask and nodded for the second time,

" 「Queen Halloween」 is the strongest summoner. There is no such thing that she can't summon. ——Luilui. If you desire a Gift in exchange for your merits in war, then I will talk to the Queen and do everything so that you will surely be given the Gift. It's possible that your power, or possibly even—— 「Perseus」 will rise to the 4 digits.

"R.....Really.....!!?"

Of course - she agreed with a small nod. Laius' expression did a dramatic change.

Staring at the helmet with teary eyes, his facial expression was going between hesitation and determination.

Several months ago——After the defeat of 「Perseus」 by the hands of the [No Names], it followed a path to ruin. At that time, Laius laughed at it saying that the collapse was unavoidable, but the ruin he actually experienced, went beyond his imaginations.

Those who left from the organization, those who scorned, those who were sad. Watching comrades like that brought unbearable pain.

Even Laius had a childhood where he was born and raised in Little Garden. All the kids of Little Garden are the same, they all have a similar wish.

——"Look up at their own flag, and become comrades worthy of it"

Spirits of the great tree, as well as fire dragons, mythical animals, humanity, everyone wants that.

Even Laius, who got distorted as he grew up, once held that wish in his heart to become a hero worthy of being called a constellation.

If it's a Gift from the Queen, then it might be possible to attain that wish.

".....You will really talk to the Queen about it, right?"

"Of course. I swear on the pride of a knight."

"It's reasonable but, you won't belittle my merits in the report right!?"

"....."

"——\*looks away\*.

"Hey, don't avert your eyesssssss!!!"

"Faceless-san. It's not the time to play with Luilui, we have to go."

"That's right. Since we properly negotiated, please quickly go now, Luilui."

Don't call me Luilui! - shouted Luilui.

After confirming the intentions from Faceless a second time, he put on the helmet despite his anger and circumstances.

After confirming that he was already out of sight, the three of them smiled with different facial expressions.

".....Yahoho. One thing or the other, It's a relief that he is continuing to grow"

"Yes. When he came to hit on Willa, I wanted to cut him in three pieces, but.....At this point, I think that not doing so was the correct decision."

"There was such a thing"

It goes without saying but, [Will o Wisp] and 「Queen Halloween」 have friendly relationships. Since Jack, the leading actor of Halloween is there, it's only natural.

In that sense, It's only natural that Faceless and Willa were on friendly terms.

Certainly, the name that Willa called her was——

"Uhh.....If I'm not mistaken, It was Feifei?"

"\_\_\_\_\_!?"

From the sudden way of calling, Faceless took a step back in surprise. It was not her usual behavior. Yo was staring at her while thinking that it was such a shame that she had a mask on right now.

Faceless with an unreadable expression put her hand on her mouth.

".....Since that nickname got attached to me, would it be alright if I call Yo-san, "Yo-Yo"?"

"Uh, sorry"

Immediate apology. After all, it's not nice to call a person with a nickname she hated.

## Part 3

——Airborne Citadel - Precipice.

The members of the main force including Izayoi were standing on the edge of the Airborne Citadel and looked down on the battle progress from the sky. Although taking the initiative was a success, it was still far from a conclusion.

It was necessary for the main force to save their strength for the final battle. Although they had impatient thoughts, right now they could do nothing but watch. So long as they are on standby, there are no dangers of being attacked according to the game rules.

Looking at the town full of heat and explosion sounds, Izayoi clicked his tongue.

".....It's a slow battle. If things go on like this, the battle might actually continue till night."

“Even if it's like that, there are no other effective ways to battle. A drawn out fight is essential. Even Izayoi-kun should understand this right?”

"I know. ....But, Is this method really effective?"

Izayoi asked Leticia while turning his head.

She quietly nodded.

If the legend Canaria told is correct, then to take down Azi Dakaha, it's necessary to pierce three vitals. First one is the skull, second are the shoulders, and the third is....the heart."

Izayoi recalled the shape of the three headed dragon.

3 stake-like things were pierced through his skulls, on his shoulders were bolt-like things that were sewing the banner on him.

"I don't know about the sown thing on his shoulders, but the stakes in the skull is one seal that we placed on him 200 years ago. If we force him to release all his offsprings, then the place where his heart is should emerge."

"But the battle won't end with just that"

Interjected, Baron la Croix while finishing Leticia's sentence.

“The offsprings are only one among the numerous Gifts of Azi Dakaha.....If we compare it to the armor, it's just one portion. Even if we destroy it, his superiority won't be shaken. There is one more weapon necessary to take down that demon lord”

".....That is?"

All eyes gathered at Baron la Croix. He held his bowler and grinned widely.

"It's the same as it has always been. All it took to defeat the Demon Lords, no matter the age was..... a single, decisive blow from the most courageous person."

Without the bright swords that heroes used, defeating the Demon Lords is impossible.

Izayoi shook shrugged and shook his head as if amazed.

"If that's the case, the one who can defeat that lizard Demon Lord isn't me, right? I have no recollection of ever showing something like courage in my whole life"

"So it seems. If we consider your power, something like a courageous spirit would be your total opposite. If there is one thing that Izayoi-kun is inferior at to the 「Candidate of Origin」 from 「Ouroboros」 , it's exactly that."

Izayoi bent his brows. It's not like there were no objections, but it's unreasonable to be judged with such abstract qualities.

" 「Candidate of Origin」 .....you say? I didn't get the joke, but with that talk, I finally made sense of one thing"

"Hou? Does that mean that, Izayoi-kun already understands who are the [Candidates of Origin]?"

"Well, roughly. In short, It's that right? The representatives in order to inquire "which is the true origin" in the birth circle of Humans and Gods. That's the destiny of the people like that Hakuhatsuki<sup>[1]</sup> and me, right?"

Which came first: the chicken or the egg?

Sakamaki Izayoi concluded that they - the "Candidates of Origin" were candidates tasked to reveal the final conclusion to the paradox game that hasn't been solved up to this point.

"Those guys, calling themselves 「Ouroboros」<sup>[2]</sup> demonstrated the current relationship between the gods and humans. This is just a hunch, but that Hakuhatsuki called "His Highness" is probably the origin candidate of the gods. That means that I'm the candidate of the humans right?"

".....Yes. It's roughly correct"

"Then, the reason that the candidates must defeat the Last Trials also lies there. Even if the starting point is determined, it won't be inconsistent even if the ending is not decided. It could be said that, we both are the prepared pawns to fight on the board known as Little Garden. ....Really, the games of gods and demons, didn't even consider the trouble they cause other people."

Izayoi sniffed at the selfishness of the story.

Holding a bowler while avoiding his gaze, Croix was covered in cold sweat.

As Canaria once said while she was still alive, Izayoi Sakamaki is infinitely close to his roots.

But if he finds out too much, then there is a problem that he will surely encounter. But if he asks a question regarding that problem, then Croix will be compelled to answer. Because, this was his final contract with Canaria. Izayoi asked with his usual nonchalant tone while Croix moved his gaze away looking uneasy.

"Thinking to this point.....There is just one thing that I don't understand. No matter how much I pondered, I still did not find the reason. But if it's you.....You can answer it, can't you, 「Tuxedo Shinigami」 ?"

".....Let's hear it"

Croix resolved himself.

As if taking him into consideration, Izayoi asked the question with a tone akin to gossiping. Not making a use of that consideration lowers the status of a god.

Izayoi floated a devilish grin as if asking about the answer to a game-

"——Why, am I a candidate?"

He casually voiced a natural question.

"....."

It's only natural if you think about it.

Izayoi Sakamaki doesn't have a single thing, that would let him be invited to this Little Garden of Gods.

If it's Kasukabe Yo and Kudou Asuka, then there are countless reasons for it. If you follow their lineages, it could possibly lead to the organization inside Little Garden that dragged them in to recover the Gifts "Genome Tree" and "Authority" or many other reasons like that could surface. Because the roots of those two are from inside Little Garden.

But, Sakamaki Izayoi's lineage——

"When I was a kid, I searched my home out of curiosity. And there I found, an ordinary father, mother and a younger brother living in leisure. Well, the little brother was somewhat unsociable but had a charming side to him.....And the parents - a relatively ordinary family of a university professor and a housewife."

"That's modesty. The parents you had became excellent humans. I and Canaria grieved when we heard about their death in an accident."

Good parents that could have become even greater. Perhaps you could even say exemplary.

But.....that's it. Because they were just that.

But there is not a single legend that would bind him to the tremendous Gift that dwelled inside Izayoi Sakamaki.

"Last night, you told me this: "Why was Sakamaki Izayoi chosen by Canaria?" .....But, the truth is different right? Canaria didn't choose me. The real objective was something else, but in the end, you had no choice but to choose Sakamaki Izayoi. ....that was really the case, right?"

There can be no other adequate explanation for it.

Then, this is the correct answer.

Izayoi was not aware of this, but——It was decided when Canaria was hospitalized from falling to an illness.

Croix and Lapko were also told that, there's truly no connection between Canaria and Sakamaki Izayoi.

It was told in a roundabout way, but in short.....it was something like this.

"——You say you were chosen by chance.... Is what you are trying to say?"

"Yeah. I can't think of anything else. Or possibly something like a will of the world, but to be chosen through something incomprehensible like that.....If it has to be given a name, it must be Fate."

Izayoi talked as if it was someone else's problem.

It was a calm answer that didn't curse the fate that probably controlled his whole life.

Holding the bowler and hiding his facial expression, Baron La Croix bowed somewhat apologetically.

".....Sorry. I can not say anything as an excuse, but it's exactly what you said. If there is something that chose you, it's something that even we, the divine spirits are not aware of. But, there's one thing that I can guarantee. You——just a human known as Sakamaki Izayoi, no matter what form, will always have the potential to save the world. This is not about the existence of your Gift. Even without that tremendous power, your, your own soul took that kind of form, and Sakamaki Izayoi was summoned for that reason."

The boy bound to be born to fight against the destroyer of the world,  
「Absolute Evil」.

Among the various timelines, only Izayoi Sakamaki will become the trigger for saving the world. It might be a boy with another name, or perhaps even a girl.

Not a hero chosen by the gods, but a hero chosen by the human history to rescue the future of humanity.

All that is connected to his Gift.

".....Haa, I see. In short, my Gift reverses cause and effect? Not a Gift that was gained by saving the past but a blessing from a promise to save the future"

"That's right. Truthfully, you should have been born a bit later. Because the formed [No Names] interfered with the human history, your date of birth undergone a big change. We created new Gods and tried to support the candidate, but.....Somehow with that interference, we hit upon the possibility called Sakamaki Izayoi."

Hmm - came an indifferent reply. Since the very beginning, Izayoi was never really interested in his personal history. In the first place, the circumstances around him were trivial to him. No matter the circumstances, the time Sakamaki Izayoi and Canaria spent together was by no means fake.

Canaria loved Izayoi like a real son.

Izayoi admired Canaria like a real mother, or like a teacher.

In front of that truth, no matter what kind of other truths pile up, they won't become a hindrance. Even if this was a strategy, Izayoi will reveal the conspirators with a smile.

But if he talked about it.....This kind of bothersome situation might had been avoided.

"Well, let's set aside the background check for now. It's good that I came to Little Garden right?"

".....? What do you mean?"

"If we sum up this conversation, then I have the job of saving humanity."

Abstract expressions like 「Absolute Evil」 gave away hints .

If you sum it up, you will arrive at this conclusion.

"——"Humanity is approaching ruin that they themselves created". This is the common point, connected to the final trials. Destruction from the radicalization of technology similar to Kali Yuga and destruction from the rampage of a single existence have the same ending. In the 20th century, many NCBR<sup>[3]</sup> were created starting from nuclear weapons. The evil of humanity running wild had enough power to pull the trigger to the eschatology."

This eschatology is different from those that are accompanied by external causes like a natural disasters or a meteorite falls. In those cases, the destruction can be avoided with the help of divine spirits' powers. But if humanity is drifting towards the end where they destroy themselves, then it's necessary for them to appoint a leader and reach the next step in evolution.

Croix who loosened his necktie a bit on his tailcoat, had a slight distant look in his eyes.

"Evolution where the leader would win against evil. It's not as easy as it sounds. The sacrifices necessary to defeat the Demon Lord 「Dystopia」 were beyond imagination. Even to the extent of the extinction of humanity..."

Izayoi remembered something he saw in a dream and made a sour face.

".....Rapid decrease of serfs from the widespread of Pest<sup>[4]</sup>. Decrease of productivity. 80 million casualties. Due to that, the social standing of serfs quickly rose, huh? .....What an ironic story. The plague that was capable of destroying humanity, in the end, changed its future."

"Right. Truthfully speaking, the release of serfs should've been stretched till around the beginning of the 20th century. In the end, all this obstructed the development of enlightenment and liberalism, while becoming a reason for the ideology of Dystopia to grow stronger."

The Black Death infection lasted no less than 100 years from the 14th century.

The outspread of Black Death that became the greatest trial of humanity was an essential event necessary to urge humanity to evolve and deny the future connected to Dystopia<sup>[5]</sup>.

*(But if that's the case, then spotted loli's wish.....Her true enemy is.....)*

His eyes contained a bit of sorrow.

It was hard to believe in the absolute legitimacy of a trial giving birth to 80 million resentments.

But if the reality of the widespread was erased from the period, then it will certainly be connected to the revival of the Demon Lord 「Dystopia」.

".....Well, there's no helping it. Or rather, It's very likely that the same thing will happen with the defeat of Azi Dakaha right?"

"Well, I wonder about that. You won't know unless you defeat him. But I can say one thing for sure - if you directly save the world, it would be the same as defeating Azi Dakaha. You or your relatives will save the world. On the contrary, If Azi Dakaha is not defeated, that world of yours will meet the worst ending, but.....It's no use thinking about it. Because that's already talking about the world you have no relations with anymore."

Said Baron La Croix with an implicating tone. What he wanted to say was easy to understand.

Izayoi as well did not question it further and let his consciousness focus on the battle ahead.

"I will understand if I defeat him? Simple is best. After all, the main problem is solved"

"That's wonderful. Since you can now concentrate on the battle, it seems that his talk was effective"

The battle on the ground is currently going smoothly. But there's no room for carelessness, It's impossible to keep attacking like this.

The battle is a living thing. The winner is not always the strongest.

If the battle continues without a problem like this——

"——No, It's not as simple as that right?"

"Ah? Is that so? I think Ojousama and the others are handling it well."

"The problem's not there. ....It's that foolish guy. We weren't able to confine that worthless demon and it might become a problem."

Tch - while clicking his tongue, the shadow moved.

Immediately followed by the crack in the sky above the airborne citadel, the main force became alert and directed their attention towards the crack that appeared in the sky and reverberated a high-pitched sound.

Croix who was glaring while holding his bowler, immediately shouted towards all the members of the main force.

"All members, prepare for battle! That guy, Maxwell has arrived!!!"

The sky ruptured. Particles of feathers fluttered down. The figure of a person clad in blue, red and pure white ornaments appeared. It's obvious who it was.

Together with the appearance of Maxwell, arched bodies returned——

「——G E E E Y A A A A A A a a a a a a !!!」

Baring their fangs and raising strange voices as if they had lost the ability to speak, they started falling inside the citadel.

The main force including Izayoi wanted to quickly assault the enemy, but at that time, someone screamed.

"L-Look!!! From the Sky..... 「Geass Rolls」 are falling from the sky——!!!"

Everyone held their breath. There are only 2 reasons for that.

Fist was the start of a new game. It made sense since a new Demon Lord appeared.

But the other one. It was the emblem of a seal that was applied at the end of the parchment which was well known to anyone in Little Garden.

The emblem of 「Draco Greif」 . Anyone would shiver from the contents that were written there.

**Gift Game "GREEK MYTHS of GRIFFIN "**

**Notification about the clearing of the above-mentioned game.**

**Winner: Azi Dakaha.**

**Winning condition: Usurpation of the treasure.**

**Representative of the hosts side, Sala Doltrake, please promptly hand over the Gift given as the award.**

## **Part 4**

At that moment.

All battle actions were halted.

".....wha.."

Kasukabe Yo who was about to leap up was surprised from the feeling as if her legs were sewn to the ground. That feeling was quite different from the feeling of immobility when losing Spiritual Power.

Kasukabe Yo who was pressed down with an inopposable degree of strength, started looking around from the disorder and finally noticed the parchments that were falling from the sky.

"Documents of 「Draco Greif」 .....I-it can't be"

That's stupid, It's too fast. Muttered Kudou Asuka and Almathea in the sky.

"Then, Sala's game was cleared.....!?"

"Wh-what incredible clearing speed!! That was the game reconstructed by the poet Aesop! From the three games, it won't be an exaggeration to say that this one was the most difficult.....!!!"

According to Izayoi, Just the level of difficulty of the riddle is even higher compared to "Pied Piper of Hamelin" and Leticia's game. Could such a strong game be cleared in just 1 day?

Holding their breath, the two of them were lost for words, but it was no time to be awestruck.

Sala Doltrake who was riding the similar fire dragon turned her gaze towards Asuka as if resolving herself.

".....Asuka. And Alma-dono. I'll transfer the right to command 「Draco Greif」 . As a Host, I have to go down to the participant."

"....That's!"

"There's no need for that!"

A large white body pierced from the misty town. Even though he should be suffering from the super gravity from Kouryuu's game, he was still flying lightly as if he was not constricted even a bit of those circumstances.

Azi Dakaha who waved the wings of dragon's shadow and suddenly rose, appeared in front of the fire dragons in an instant. Looking at the golden cane in his hand, Sala tasted defeat. There's no doubt anymore.

This three headed dragon perfectly cleared the game [GREEK MYTHS of GRIFFIN] that she organized with his own power.

Looking at his ruby eyes, Sala held her breath, but showed a firm smile.

".....As expected from the legendary Demon Lord. It seems that your knowledge is also extraordinary. It's unbelievable that not even a day has passed.....and not a single penalty was received. As the organizer, I recognize your skillfulness."

“GREEK MYTHS of GRIFFIN „ was prepared so that the factors could lead the player to misunderstand the answers. If three penalties were received, it could be possible to seal him even if he was the three headed dragon.

If he hesitated to answer, the battle would have protracted. And if the wrong answer was given, then the seal could have been received.

But this three headed dragon without fear nor hesitation, stepped forth and traveled by foot. What admirable courage.

"Hm. There is no need to deprecate yourself. Your game turned out to be very cunning. The information written on the "Geass Roll" was not vague, but

instead used to mislead the player from the answer, and that implied that there exists multiple answers for this game. Even I couldn't help but be cautious of this."

That's right. There are three answers to this game.

One of them interprets the treasure as a banner of the Demon Lord of gold 「Queen Halloween」 .

The second and third ones interpret the treasure as the golden staff of "Kerykeion<sup>[6]</sup>".

Even without approaching the three final answers, the points needed to clear the game are included aside from penalties.

"But taking the stages of the other games in chronology is a bit overdoing it. As a result, your game made me narrow down the answers more than with the other games."

".....!!"

The golden staff Kerykeion - is a symbol of a Greek God of trade known as the messenger God. If there is an appropriate place on this stage where it should be kept, then it would be the place where the independence of Greece was declared——At the location of the meeting of the year 1830 ."

Year 1830, London meeting——the meeting where Great Britain, France and Russia recognized the independence of Greece.

The messenger God known as Hermes does the work of a diplomat, flying between gods. If you think about his history, in nine out of ten cases, the guess would be linked to the London meeting.

"But the place this golden staff was installed in was not the meeting place.....but at the bank. At first I thought that I was reading too much into it, but if you think about the historical background of London, there's another truth that rises to the surface"

"....."

"Judging by the condition of the clock tower, it's safe to say that it was constructed sometime between the year 1860 and year 1890 . Within that time frame, there was an event that was connected to the Bank of Great Britain and to the trade Gods.....Arriving at this point, even a kid would understand. The Victorian era of England——To put a stop to the Great Depression that started in 1870, that is the interpretation of this 「Kerykeion」 "

——But... - the three headed dragon paused.

"This investigation is lacking, the composition of the game goes beyond broad interpretation. All the more if a well-known poet took part in reconstructing it. ....Don't you think so, Pumpkin executioner?"

Far below on the ground, jack shuddered.

The three headed dragon smiled and showed his fangs while looking down at him.

"At that point, I changed my point of view. Is it that the poet Aesop, who wrote the world's three biggest fables had no choice but to organize a deformed game like this, because there are limits to the extent of the stage, which can be achieved with remaking it with Jack's true identity who is a leading actor of this stage?"

The hosts who listened to the speech of the three headed dragon, were assaulted with shock running through them. The Demon Lord whose ruby eyes were shining, pointed at Jack below and smiled brutally.

"That's right. This stage is from the year 1873, when the Great Depression began, and not from 1888 - the year when [Jack the Ripper] appeared. There is just one meaning behind this. ——Fufu. Before demanding the reward from the fire dragons, I will tell you what the solution is to your 「Pumpkin the Clown」 "

Everyone instinctively knew that the situation was bad.

Jack's game can be cleared just by having an answer and an argument. If he were to present his arguments while clearing Sala's game when all the games

are halted, the three headed dragon will then be able to clear two games at the same time.

It's also unnecessary to use the [Authority of Judge Master] for interruption like Kuro Usagi.

This Demon Lord dominated the games with just his courage and wisdom.

(This.....This is the 「Last Embryo」 .....!!!)

Utterly overwhelming the opponent in everything - power, wisdom and courage.

He is the oldest Demon Lord, and the strongest God Killer.

The Demon Lord looked down at Jack with all his 3 heads and six eyes, and——

"Jack! You——You are not [Jack the Ripper]!!!"

——He threw the truth towards the monster given birth by Great Britain.

With a sound like a glass shattering, Jack's blood smeared knife shattered. And at the same time, blood gushed out from all of his wounds.

The red clothes were dyed crimson by blood even more.

The already gravely injured Jack had his wounds open up ruthlessly as his immortality left him completely.

"Gu- Gah.....!!!"

Blood was shed from his abdomen with a sound that was completely different from the usual sound of blood flow. Trying to stop the bleeding from his mouth, he held it with his right hand, but it was futile effort and the blood spilled over anyway. Kasukabe Yo screamed with a pale face.

"Jack!"

".....Yahoho. "Certainly, this.....!!"

He was feigning a smile with all his strength, but that was his limit. Jack crumbled from the knees and fell on his own pool of blood and soon enough, he stopped moving. The shoulders' heaving movements from breathing was still apparent so he was not dead yet, but it was only a matter of time.

Looking uninterested at that scene, the three headed dragon returned his gaze towards Sala Doltrake.

".....With the current circumstances, solving the remaining puzzle is also unnecessary. Let's get down to business, fire dragon girl"

Sala's face stiffened. No matter what kind of strong-hearted girl she was, It's inevitable that she'd pale if she sees Jack's gruesome state.

As if getting ashamed of her thoughts, Sala shook her head and gazed with an indomitable fighting spirit.

Even if her life was taken, her pride won't be stained.

Taking on that kind of strong gaze, the three headed dragon happily laughed from the bottom of his heart.

"Fufu. What a strong set of eyes! Such gallant figure that doesn't yield even before the Demon Lord, I take that in high regard!"

Persistent eyes, directed towards the Demon Lord just how it should be.

In a tension that had everyone's breath stolen, the three headed dragon sadistically smiled and demanded the reward.

"Hero of fire dragons! What I desire is.....To receive your entire Spiritual Power!!"

At that moment, Sala's dragon horns broke. It didn't break with a delicate voice like before.

Just like a thunder in the night, just like a volcanic eruption, Sala's dragon horns were broken from the base and disappeared only to reappear in Azi Dakaha's hand.

But it didn't end with just that.

Holding the dragon horns of the fire dragon and the griffin, the three headed dragon threw them towards the ground.

"This is the reward. My offsprings, take the dragon horns and gain power!!!"

The bricks that covered the pavements started to beat. That beating was so strong that it resounded throughout the whole town. The brick twin-headed dragons that took the dragon horns yelled like the incarnation of a raging storm and displayed their shape to Kasukabe Yo and the others.

"Dragon horns of the fire dragon and griffin.....!"

"Kasukabe-san, please take Jack and fall back!!"

Faceless took out the snake sword and leapt at the twin dragons alone. She is a powerful being that is even among the top of the main force. Even Izayoi, who had an overwhelming difference of physical strength compared to her, was astonished with her special moves.

While swinging the snake sword in every direction, she rushed to attack.

But the twin-headed dragons manipulated the atmosphere around them and flicked off the snake sword with walls of air that were compressed to the extent that even the plasma was visible.

"Ku...I can't reach.....!"

『G E E Y A A A A A a a a a a !!!』

With the release of the compressed power, it reverberated with an impact that even made waves to became visible in the atmosphere.

From the beginning, the twin-headed dragons possessed power on par with an average divine spirit. And in addition to that, they were given a Gift of divine class. That power far exceeded the power of an ordinary two-headed dragon.

Faceless danced in the air while being hit by the walls of compressed air that assaulted her from every direction.

She shielded herself with the rubble, but after analyzing her sustained wounds and the extent of their strength, she got covered in cold sweat.

(.....*The worst compatibility*)

She is the best when it comes to fencing, but if the enemy possesses a giant body and high firepower, then cheap tricks won't work. Even if the blade reaches them, it might not even leave a single scratch and that made her truly realize the danger they were in.

Faceless fixed her sword, thinking that all she could do was to buy some time.

On the other side, Sala who collapsed after losing her dragon horns and Asuka along with the others, were glaring at the three headed dragon before them.

But the ambition for triumph from a while ago was nowhere to be seen on the members of 「Salamandra」 and 「Draco Greif」 .

Tactics were broken, the games were almost solved, one of the 「Floor Masters」 fell.

The facial expressions of the Hosts were filled with terror.

The three headed dragon loudly tuned the neck and sneered at them.

"Well. What's wrong? Are you finished already?"

".....!!!"

"Ran out of strategy? The fighting spirit withered? All hopes disappeared? What's wrong, oh great heroes?"

There were no voices who retorted the three headed dragon's provocation. Seeing the hosts fall into panic from their current situation, the three headed dragon widened his eyes...

"——I see. Then die."

Without hesitation, he bared his fangs of despair.



## **Notes and References:**

- 1.** White-haired Demon.
- 2.** Universe Ring.
- 3.** NCBR - Weapons of Mass Destruction.
- 4.** Black death.
- 5.** Locked World
- 6.** Caduceus.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Part 1**

—— [Kouen, City of Brilliant Flames], ruins.

In [Kouen City] capital that was devastated by the battle last night, the man called Grimm was holding his stomach laughing while stomping his foot.

*DaDaDa!* While stomping until dust was floating, he revealed the most distasteful smile.

“Brilliant indeed, His Excellency! At such a crucial timing, to shatter their wonderful dream! That was so cruel! Repaid with three times the interest! Aah, you are so wonderful!!!”

Opening the cloth made of Mythological Fox Demon Tail, inheriting the gift of clairvoyance, he peeked over the different locations of the game stage.

After a round of hysterical laughter, the man wiped away his looming tears and stood up after feeling satisfied.

“This is how it is. This is a Gift Game. This is the Game of Gods and Demons. The bunch from the Outer World feign ignorance about their immaturity and powerlessness once they face a crisis. Whining that is talent, that is cheating. Then they finally result to painstakingly change the rules in ambiguous ways and widening the interpretations to take pride in it, even trying to show off how excellent they are. What’s pitiful is that those little tricks from the minor players are slowly poisoning Little Garden.”

The man drowning in the control of the Three Headed Dragon's game tightened his fist.

“However...His Excellency is different. Using power to overcome the strong, using tactics to deceive the wise, using majesty to defeat the brave! Aah, that's right! This is it, the Game Make only those walking the majestic path are capable of! His Excellency, you are the strongest Demon Lord...!!!”

With eyes shining like an innocent child, the man opened both his hands.

The construction of Gift Games was restricted by a silent agreement between several Gods —— 『Geass Roll creation rule』 . The most important and respected rule is “a game’s divinity cannot be violated”. In essence, if borrowing the name of Existing Game to continue, one cannot carry out the Existing Game’s prohibited actions.

If it is an original game, the Host and the Participant cannot have different interpretations over the game rules nor reward. If there is no common understanding then the game cannot be established, the Geass Roll also cannot be made. Since that was neither a game nor a duel, only despicable deceit.

Gift Games only stood on the starting line of the stage after surpassing humanity.

In a game of power, wisdom and courage amongst the Transcendents, humans that depended on those trickery do not deserve to stand on stage like Galdo in the past, but to be eliminated by the real players.

“It really makes me want to shout ‘Gods and Buddhas banzai’. The noble path, that led to their loss would not work when facing His Excellency’s Game Make. Don’t you think so, Rin?”

“...Yes, Sensei.”

Rin nodded with a nervous expression. She was a sophisticated Game Maker. She saw through the harsh condition of the Host immediately.

(His Highness...seemed to have hidden off somewhere, what exactly is he planning to do?)

It could not be won alone. But it would be hard to cooperate with the Host, Rin thought.

To cooperate during the fight, a trigger would be necessary.

“Speaking of which, Sensei. Isn’t Maxwell left to a man called Koumei? To just allow him to cut in, this is really unlike Sensei’s behavior...”

“Ahh, it can’t be helped. I didn’t expect his rationale to have deteriorated to the point of ignoring Koumei...However, to be intercepted by Pseudo-Angels and letting that fellow slip past is just...Totally a disgrace that Koumei’s past self could not imagine.”

Snorting, the man continued.

“Maxwell is just being Maxwell.. Even without completing his form, he just flew out of the pupa in an incomplete state. That virgin is just impatient, vexing others. He should have changed his soul status, that pervert.”

So damn troublesome, the man viciously clicked his tongue.

“The ‘Third Perpetual Machine’ cannot be used unless there is a proper vessel. Maxwell can be counted as a distant sibling, maybe it is possible...but to be driven berserk by love, this is totally anti-dramatic. If he truly was driven to insanity by love, not destroying the target of affection would render it meaningless. Understanding this point, your provocation still holds meaning.”

To the Sensei in a good mood, Rin responded without energy.

Taking this chance to investigate everything, Rin raised her hand and asked.

“In your honest opinion Sensei, which side do you think will win?”

“Aiya, this is really an unmotivating question. Although I want to ask you to think for yourself, this time would be an exception. —— Ahem. Yes. In a frontal confrontation, I believe My Lord will win.”

Suddenly ceasing his smile, the man answered.

Rin displayed a listening ear and asked again.

“Azi Dahaka received the second seal in the battle from 200 years ago, causing his physical ability to deteriorate. Sensei thinks even with this, winning is impossible?”

“Ahh. Fundamentally as long as His Excellency has ‘Avesta’, it can be evened out regardless of the difference in power. That is the ‘Another Cosmology’ of rivalry that is able to construct the dualism with the fastest speed. With that Gift, regardless of any opponent or situation, His Excellency’s winning chances will not be lower than 50%.”

“If I remember correctly, it is the ‘Another Cosmology’ that copies the opponent’s abilities exactly as it is to himself...right?”

“Yes. It is because of this Gift, that not matter how many Gods gathered, His Excellency cannot be defeated. The more enemy Gods there are, the stronger His Excellency becomes.”

Also this is the Gift that extinguished the Garuda’s flames. Not only the opponent’s ability, but it also acts as a reverse mirror to cancel Gifts.

Imitating the reverse of opponent’s Cosmology and integrating it into himself in limited usage.

It was ranked as one of the strongest mostly due to this ‘Another Cosmology’.

“Because of this, even a Chief God level being will have a hard time defeating His Excellency. After all everything including the Gift is imitated.”

“...Saying this might offend Sensei, but this is a cheating Gift that seems to be even more powerful than the one in the rumors. But if that really is the case, then nobody can win. Although it is to defeat the clones, if the more

people there is, the stronger he becomes, then there is no method left. No need to even think about plans. The Host masters are all going to cry.”

“No, one race is an exception. Also the weakness. I think His Excellency's ‘Another Cosmology’ is a Gift made specifically for that race.”

The man known as Grimm raised his index finger and smiled.

“A type of Cosmology. Wrong, in this case calling it Chronology is better. The specie that shares the same Chronicle as Azi Dahaka, no matter how many it cannot be imitated.”

“ Is that the human race...?”

“Yes. Mah, it was originally human’s pus, should be meaning something similar to disease/trouble). Only those that have inherited the blood of humans can squeeze pass ‘Avesta’’s loophole and challenge His Excellency. It’s also because of this that His Highness’ original body has a human foundation.

According to the legend, Azi Dahaka had the fate of being defeated by “the hero that saved humanity’s future” appearing at the end of the world.

*(In that case, the direct confrontation against Azi Dahaka from the Host side has about three, four people. Although it would be best to join forces with that Izayoi-something guy...)*

...It won’t work, Rin shook her head in her mind.

As for why it wouldn't work, it would be because of the fact that the enemy would not naively turn a blind eye over the conflict in [Underwood] and [Kouen City].

If there existed a situation that compels a joint in forces like before, or a sure-win plan, then it would be another matter ——

“Speaking of which, Rin. What happened to those two children?”

“Ah, yes. I tied them up properly.”

“Is that so? Then I need to take them down first. Especially that spotted lass for she is an important piece that might become our trump card. Chances are hard to come by. You better watch and learn.”

“Learn...is it?”

Learn what? Rin tilted her head, the man replied with a suspicious giggle.

*Yokkorase*<sup>[1]</sup>, the man stood up releasing pressure strong enough to be felt even when separated by the static.

“Do you even need to ask? Of course it is the splendid trick of the ‘Storyteller’ that even dares to deceive the Man-eating fiends.”

## Part 2

—— Airborne Citadel·Precipice.

Facing an assault from Maxwell that appeared in the air, non-combatants raised cries and started fleeing. The Citadel had many supporting personnel for the participants led by “No Name”.

If they were attacked by Maxwell, they wouldn’t last even a single hit.

Izayoi held the Geass Roll that recorded Sala’s defeat as he shouted at Croix.

“Hey, Shinigami!”

“I know! Since it’s like this it can’t be helped! Main forces! Divide into three teams for a counter attack!”

Croix used his finger to draw a line, opening an “Astral Gate”. Leticia looked at Roc Demon Lord.

“Affirmative! Karyou-dono and I will handle the Three Headed Dragon!”

“Okay. Don’t be a hindrance, Vampire.”

The two jumped into the “Astral Gate” prepared by Croix.

Kouryuu stood next to the cliff, watching over Kasukabe’s group.

“I will go to the surface. That’s where the Twin Headed Dragon with the Dragon Horn is. The Queen’s knight and Yō probably can’t handle it.”

“Please. As a God, I cannot battle against the Three Headed Dragon. Therefore ——”

“Let’s defeat that stalker! Come on Shinigami!”

Izayoi ran towards the place where Maxwell landed.

Leaving the Redeveloping City, Izayoi stood in front of the castle gate. Recalling the floor map inside the castle with his memory, he estimated where that guy fell.

*(Willa did not participate in last night’s battle due to fatigue. Then that guy should be coming after Willa.)*

The floor plane in his brain showed that the VIP room Willa was resting at and Maxwell’s landing point were different. The possibility of him rampaging around before finding Willa was not low.

There was no time to think about delaying. Lily and the others appearing before Maxwell is equivalent to death.

Coming to the conclusion of going to the place with a big commotion, Izayoi suddenly focused towards the Hall within the Citadel.

“...Wha.”

“Oioi, don’t just rush in without thinking! What do you think I am staying here for?!”

Facing the indignant Croix, Izayoi showed a reaction of realization.

“I forgot. You can teleport.”

“...I say, you get careless at important parts. Forget it, leave evacuation to me. You go stop Maxwell.”

“Thanks for that, but where is that guy?”

“I'm going to send you there now. I will follow up soon. Don't do anything rash.”

Izayoi nodded, and changed his focus again.

At the castle top where Maxwell fell, there were no movements for now. Izayoi remembered Maxwell's appearance just now and he realized that something was amiss with Maxwell's mentality.

(From our encounter from before, he still had some sanity. Did [Ouroboros] do something?)

His attire was also different from Maxwell's previous coat of red and white contrast, It now changed to a white-themed costume. Something like wings also grew from his back, radiating feathers of light.

If he were to describe that appearance, it would be like an angel.

“GE...RE...!!!” (Give me)

Letting out an obviously abnormal creaking sound..

Staring at the still Maxwell after landing, Izayoi clenched his fist.

“In the end you’re just a broken angel? It looks pretty if not for your stalker trait. But now is not the time to play with you...!!!”

Towards Maxwell who fell on all fours, Izayoi swung his fist. Maxwell’s handsome face simply crumbled from the impact.

Although there was feeling, Izayoi thought that wasn’t a fatal hit.

Maxwell immediately regenerated his crumpled face and stared at Izayoi as he screamed.

“GE...RE...WE——WEEEeeeeLAAAaaa!!!” (Give me Willa!)

“You got the wrong person, hentai Demon Lord!!!”

Maxwell stood up with his feet and charged at Izayoi with an expression so fearsome that made it look like his mouth was tearing apart. Izayoi swung his fist in reflex, but Maxwell teleported to his back and clutched Izayoi’s neck.

Izayoi did not react to the grip but struggled from feeling a rapid drop in body temperature from his throat.

“This, this bastard...!!!”

Even if Izayoi had a strong body, losing body temperature would cause cell decay and lead to death. Also, it was not directly stealing body temperature but directly injecting cold air into his mouth to steal heat.

Despite being in a berserked mode, this was a rather brilliant tactic coming from him.

Izayoi struggled to free himself from the clutch by twisting his joints while fracturing him and held him like that. But Maxwell continued to use teleport and disappeared from Izayoi's grasp.

Maxwell floated around the collapsed ceiling. His arm regenerated with the same creaking sound like before.

Izayoi coughed once then clicked his tongue against this troublesome enemy.

*(This is teleportation huh. This guy is more troublesome than I thought.)*

Without a future sight ability like Kasukabe Yō's, attacking him was not an easy task. Even if an attack hit, it would immediately regenerate. Nothing was more troublesome than this. Defeating this enemy requires the strongest attack.

Izayoi flexed his right hand confirming the degree of his recovery.

His right fist was shattered from the fight with Three Headed Dragon but greatly recovered thanks to the Gift from Unicorn's horn. With this, it should withhold Izayoi's power.

*(Just the perfect chance to warm up before fighting the Three Headed Dragon. I can't fight that Demon Lord without being in the best condition.)*

His right hand began to radiate some rays of light. At this moment, a new question came to mind.

(“*Another Cosmology*”...is it? Since I have this, it means this pillar is the form of the Humanity’s outlook on the Universe...?)

Pondering for a while, he immediately gave up. Thinking too deep into doubts was his bad habit.

What exactly this power meant could be researched in the future. Because to Izayoi, the meaning behind this pillar’s existence was simply victory if it hit.

The question now was how he would make it hit, but Izayoi had a plan.

No matter what, he needed help.

However his opponent would not wait.

Maxwell bent his body backwards and screamed, he then started to steal the surrounding heat.

“WEEeeeeLAAAaaaa!!!” (Willa!)

Despite losing sanity, he still called Willa’s name. Izayoi suddenly had a thought thought; “Why not just bring Willa here?”, but now was not the time to play around.

The Citadel was surrounded by cold air as if it was in a frigid zone causing ice pillars and icicles to appear on the stone walls.

In addition to that, Maxwell stored the heat that was robbed inside his body.

“Oioi...don’t tell me, he wants to concentrate the vast heat energy and self-destruct...!?”

Izayoi mocked in cold sweat. But this was the only conclusion. The self-detonation coming from the Gift of heat manipulation and super regeneration (nuclear meltdown). The resilient Izayoi might be fine, but the Airborne Citadel might very well crash. That also meant, Lily and others would be in danger.

While planning to raise his right hand without considering the consequences, Croix appeared out of thin air.

“Sorry, to have kept you waiting!”

“You took too long! Was the evacuation completed?”

“Of course! On the other hand, are you ready!?”

Izayoi raised his right hand in response. The two believed that they were thinking of the same plan.

When Maxwell radiated white heat from his body, he began to continuously teleport around the two. Although it was just random continuous jumping that left afterimages, it was a logical defensive method. Factoring the loss of sanity, the locations where he appeared were rendered totally random.

I must not let him buy time for self-detonation.

Croix=Baron abandoned his human form and reverted back to his shady Shinigami appearance, displaying wretched nature as he laughed sharply.

“Jihahaha!!! In conclusion, there is not enough time! The only chance comes after five seconds! One hit to decide the victor!”

The room full of rubble was covered in shade.

The "Boundary" that manifested as a planar darkness was the gate between life and death.

The eternal crossroad between life and death that became a divine spirit of the Voodoo group of gods.

This was the “Boundary Gate” that the “Tuxedo Shinigami”, the Divine Spirit of life and disordered love governed.

Different from Willa and Maxwell who could teleport but with limitations, he could maintain the unlocked condition of the gate. Opening that gate required teleport all the time, which meant that he could summon the target anywhere within that space.

As Croix had shown Izayoi before, he also understood that special trait.

In five seconds Maxwell would appear right in front of Izayoi. For the sake of that hit, he calculated the timing mentally. Despite the possibility of appearing anywhere, it was only a flash of moment.

Even with a tenth of a second timing off, it would be evaded and result in failure.

The two synchronized their breathing and opened their eyes.

“The prelude is over. Disappear, ‘Maxwell Demon Lord’ ——!!!”

Aurora lights filled the surrounding.

Maxwell maintained the vast heat energy while melting away in the light pillar.

## **Notes and References:**

1. Yokkorase - The sound of someone standing up while putting some effort in it.

## Chapter 5

Suddenly, Coppelia held her head due to a mysterious headache.

“\_\_\_\_\_!?”

“Don’t get distracted, Coppelia! They are coming!”

She raised her head. And in the next moment, the head of the fire dragon she rode on was lobbed off.

The Three Headed Dragon was right before her eyes. Coppelia immediately crouched down, avoiding the tempest raised by the sharp claws. Suffering from a mysterious headache, she pressed her forehead while falling with the fire dragon’s corpse.

*(Just now...as if there was someone else’s consciousness, entering my body...?)*

A large amount of data and unfamiliar memories were inserted into Coppelia’s soul. The sudden event caused her to grip the fire dragon’s reins tightly and leave the front line.

Seeing her in this state, Asuka clenched her teeth and shouted.

“Just retreat like that for now, Coppelia, and regroup with Kasukabe-san! Look for a chance to take care of Jack!”

“...Very sorry. I...understand.”

Coppelia squeezed out her voice while bearing the headache.

The aerial battle was already in a total mess..

Salamandra and Draco Grief surrounding the Three Headed Dragon used high speed flight, firing altogether under Asuka's command.

Swinging the Flute of Ratten, Asuka injected power into her words.

“Zengun<sup>[1]</sup>, fire together!!!”

*Clang*, an elegant sound accompanied the swung flute.

Fire dragons' fireballs, Stymphalian birds' poison fog and hails of arrows shot out from all directions. Those attacks blessed by Asuka's Gift to obtain temporal divinity were much more stronger than normal weapons.

The Three Headed Dragon wrapped himself with Dragon's Shadow and performed high speed rotations to deflect the attacks, then transformed it into black bullets to intercept the enemy formation.

The fire dragons and the eudemons in the bullets' line of fire were shredded up, raising desperate cries.

“GEYAAAAaaa!!!”

“Uu, got hit again...!!!”

“Master, now is not the time to worry about your surroundings! Come here quickly!”

Almathea in her divine goat form morphed into a steel shield to wrap around the fire dragon Asuka was riding on. Nobody could leave even a scar on the invulnerable fortress Almathea morphed into.

However those that were not under her protection were a different matter altogether.

The Three Headed Dragon flitted past the Almathea-clad impenetrable fortress, using sharp claws to decapitate nearby fire dragons and Stymphalian birds.

Hearing the cries of agony while inside the protection, Asuka got so angry that her hair stood on ends as she shouted.

“Alma, release the protection now!”

“No! Please inquire about the situation from Lapko and issue orders from within the impenetrable fortress.”

“Are you telling me to hide in safety as I give orders!? That is something only the despicable would do!!!”

“But the front lines will collapse if you die!!! Please endure for now!!!”

Almathea desperately increased her defenses. Clearly understanding the situation outside, her voice was filled with never-before-seen anxiety.

Mandora understood Asuka's condition, hence he infused all his power into his blood crystallized Dragon Horns and roared.

“Fire dragons retreat to the back! Demon-Dragons, follow me!”

UUuuuOOOoooo!!!

Roaring everywhere, the vampirized dragon fleet flew in a staggered formation.



Gliding while spewing flames from his blood crystal, Mandora crashed into the bosom of the Three Headed Dragon while raising his sword and then swinging it down.

He planned to cleave through the right head down to the shoulder but his blade was shattered by the Three Headed Dragon's sharp teeth.

“Gu...!”

“Playing with brute force, eh? How childish!”

As if swatting away a mosquito, he swung his claw lightly.

Although Mandra became a Demon-Dragon, he was still no different from an insect before the Three Headed Dragon's attack. However, the fact that he was still able to slightly turn his body to evade, was probably due to the relentless training for a hundred years. The sharp claw that was supposed to cut through Mandora's body into half only scraped past his arm, cutting off everything below his elbow.

“Ge...Gah ——!?”

“Mandora-sama!”

“How dare you, bastard!”

“Demon-Dragon team, keep it coming! Spread yourselves to stop him!”

The Demon-Dragons roared to raise morale. They were not the only ones barely holding on to the fight. The Three Headed Dragon's rampage continued to rob the lives of fire dragons and eudemons.

Comrades decapitated by the sharp claws, throat torn by the sharp teeth...

Mandora pressed on his severed arm, as well as he bit his lips until it was bleeding.

“Abandoning bloodline...Abandoning comrades as tools...Even still, not even a single hit made through...!!!”

Spitting the feeling of anguish. He already gambled everything he had now. But blocking even for a single moment already wore him out. Compared to the pain from bleeding, the pain of regret made him even more mad. Despite this, as the clan of the Floor Master, as a protector of order, he could not shrink back here. Seeming to trace one after another comrade that lost his life, Mandora held his ground.

Almathea was protecting Asuka so she could only stand by at the sidelines.

That scene, although very majestic, could not be shown to Asuka, as directly confronting the Three Headed Dragon would probably shake her mind until she loses herself.

“Master...Please understand your own role. Your responsibility is to provide support to our comrades. If you cannot do it, our comrades will continue to

die. If you have the time to be capricious, you should just focus on what you can do for now!”

“Uu...!!!”

Receiving scolding, Asuka clenched her teeth in regret.

—— A battle with life on the line, a battle that reduced lifespan.

*Giving these kinds of order without mercy is your role,* only this line remained. If this mission was given to her out of trust and loyalty towards her, then she would not be in such deep regret.

But reality was on the contrary. Kudo Asuka’s commands had the effects of raising combat powers. It was only because of this petty reason that they obeyed Asuka who’s barely acquainted with them as they gambled their lives to fight.

Putting it as “having the right person for the right job” might sound good, but Asuka was too immature for such decisiveness, and at the same time too gentle.

Lapko II sat on Asuka’s shoulder, awaiting command.

“Kudou Asuka, I will relay your voice. Please issue command.”

“...”

“Order now! A second’s delay will cause another life lost!”

“—— Uu, I know even if you don’t tell me!!!”

Wiping away her tears, she swung her Flute of Ratten.

Fire dragons and eudemons shrieked from the extreme pain from the mock divinity and it’s consequences. Several hundred fire dragons and eudemons possessing mock divinity spurred their body towards the Three Headed Dragon and simultaneously shot with all their strength.

With the Three Headed Dragon’s speed, he should have been able to avoid it, but the super gravity restriction from Saurian Demon King’s Gift Game was still in effect.

Understanding that he was unable to avoid everything, the Three Headed Dragon disengaged his defense and spewed out flames from the mouths of his three heads.

Flame spewed out by the Three Headed Dragon deflected the several hundreds bullets possessing mock divinity, dissolving into the force that divided London City.

The ground that was struck by the bullets radiated with blazing heat, melting into a molten surface and releasing nauseating heat waves.

Since Sala’s Gift Game was already solved, the Three Headed Dragon had no reason to hold back against the surroundings. He just needed to exhaust his power that was hailed as a natural disaster to devastate those ants that dared to defy him.

Like a hurricane; Like a tsunami; Like a thunderstorm.

The red jade eyes that discarded all feelings silently robbed away the Host's lives.

*(...But this is too inefficient.)*

While spewing out flames, he observed below.

Like the air force, the ground force battle line also collapsed. But amongst them, a single female knight that could stop the two-headed dragon was there as she remained standing.

The Three Headed Dragon bared his fangs to reveal a crescent mouth, bursting in laughter.

*(Is she the key player on the ground? If so, then it's simple.)*

The Three Headed Dragon raised his right hand, scratched his left arm and sprayed fresh blood.

Ten pure white two-headed dragons born out of the blood, fell onto the ground. If facing the dragon-horned two-headed dragon already took her all, then she should not be able to fend off this assault.

*(That said, I already released a lot of Spiritual Power even before the Game began. Should I avoid further bloodshed?)*

In a clash between two “Another Cosmology”, even the Three Headed Dragon would not be unscathed. Just from the aftermath of yesterday's fight, large amounts of blood were spilled and the soul status of hundreds of offsprings was already lost. Although spirit levels could be recovered over time, his massive loss of spirit status due to battle was just yesterday. Only a little soul status was left that could be spared for the offsprings.

*(The winged underlings would consume a lot of soul status, but when gathering in masses, they take too much time)*

Even if mock divinity could not be a match for the Three Headed Dragon, it should still not to be taken lightly. Being too arrogant might spell defeat regardless of how much advantage an individual has.

While injecting power into his right hand to make new clones —— the Three Headed Dragon noticed a huge Spiritual Power and stopped.

“This is as far as it goes, Azi Dahaka!”

With fluttering hair so beautiful that it could be mistaken for golden threads, Leticia assaulted with her dragon's shadow.

The Three Headed Dragon wanted to shake her off like last night, but opened his eyes wide from that unexpected sharpness.

“Ugh...?”

Dracula's Dragon's shadow cut open the Dragon's Shadow of the Three Headed Dragon.

Shadow fangs transformed into thousands of spears aiming for the Three Headed Dragon. That heaviness from the impact could not be compared to last night. Although it was not enough deal damage to the Three Headed Dragon, the spirit level definitely increased.

Without waiting for the Three Headed Dragon to clear his doubts, Roc Demon Lord initiated an assault as well.

Roc Demon Lord shouted to the surrounding fire dragons.

“We will make him split his clones! You Fire dragons will take care of those then!”

“Sor...sorry! The Three Headed Dragon is all yours!”

Fire dragons reluctantly followed Roc demon Lord’s instructions.

The Three Headed Dragon mocked that clear-to-see naivety.

“Maybe I heard it wrong...With just the two of you, could you really make me bleed?”

“That is so, what of it? If a chance comes by, we will aim for your three heads. If the Great Demon Lord Azi Dahaka so requests, we could perform it for you right now.”

Roc Demon Lord covered her smile. In her hand was the Geass Roll with the seal of the “Great Sage who Devastate Seas” flag.

The Three Headed Dragon trailed off with his mocking, his red jade eyes shone.

“Save me the boring bluff. I have already investigated the Host Authority that the Garuda holds. That cannot become the decisive blow to defeat me. So you purposely did not initiate the Game, only to make others feel you still have a trump card up your sleeves, right?”

“Uu...!”

With her plan seen through, Roc Demon Lord’s face was shaded red from embarrassment.

On the other hand, Leticia revealed a fearless smile.

“It is hard to say. Karyou-dono is a princess that left her clan at the age of 14 or 15. If you take it that her Host Authority is as traditional as it may seem, then you can keep on thinking that way.”

“...Hoh?”

Affirming the truth of Leticia’s speech deep within those red jade eyes.

But the Three Headed Dragon’s thoughts did not waver. Rather, the Three Headed Dragon felt the real trick lied within the reason Leticia not activating her Host Authority.

*(Her spirit level is swelling. This can be recognized as satisfying the conditions to host the Game unconsciously...Then what I need to be aware of is not Garuda, but only this vampire's Game?)*

He recalled her actions after Leticia appeared.

Hypothesizing there existed some special hosting condition, complying to that, the game could be started after some time passed, or possibly triggered after the killing of comrades.

Satisfying the condition but not starting immediately should be some part of the plan. Then the Three Headed Dragon only had one course of action to take.

“Fine. I will play along with you, vampire. I will prove to you that just you two will not make me bleed a drop of blood.”

“That should be our line! We will prove to you that just the two of us are enough to take your head!!!”

Dragon's shadow spread over the plane.

The lightless sky of shadows released countless two dimensional blades. Understanding that this was the same Gift system as his, the Three Headed Dragon daringly used the same Gift to counter.

Although Leticia knew her strength could not compete against him, she also understood that they could not carry out the final battle plan without making the Three Headed Dragon bleed.

*(My Host Authority is one of the trump cards. It cannot be used yet...!)*

The Sun Authority of Asclepius that Shiroyasha entrusted.

Using it as a medium, it was able to summon the huge dragon from a solar eclipse. Although the Game rules were not as complicated as before, it could become a huge combat strength to finish off the Three Headed Dragon.

Leticia continued to shoot out endless blades while competing in a melee battle with the Three Headed Dragon.

Roc Demon Lord took this chance to fly closer. Even though she already knew that Garuda flames could not beat him, she still wanted to try regardless.

Making the Three Headed Dragon bleed wasn't their only objective.

Surrounding him with Garuda flames and dragon shadow, the two then made eye contact and initiated their attack.

*(Even if the Three Headed Dragon can't be killed ——)*

*(—— At least, we must destroy the wings on his back!!!)*

Infusing all their soul status, they assaulted the Dragon's Shadow that turned into wings.

Originally planning to use the same Gift system to repel them, the Three Headed Dragon realized their objective at that moment.

“Your...real objective, is my wings!”

Prowess for prowess, wisdom for wisdom. As a Demon Lord, the Three Headed Dragon would crush his opponent's speciality.

And because of that, the two of them predicted that if they challenged him with the Gift of the same system, then he would surely respond with the wing of Dragon's Shadow.

If he were to lose his wings for even just a moment, the rest could then be handled by the strong people on the ground.

Believing that martial arts experts like Saurian Demon King or Faceless would surely dig out Three Headed Dragon's heart, the two of them then sacrificed themselves for the assault.

“Fall to the ground, Three Headed Dragon ——!!!”

Caught in the anti-dragon Garuda flame, Leticia's dragon shadow shattered. But the Dragon's shadow shattering was not only her's.

The right dragon shadow wing of the three Headed Dragon also lost its form after shattering into countless fragments.

The three Headed Dragon went wide-eyed in astonishment after losing his balance —— then, revealed a ferocious smile.

“...Unexpectedly competent. This is a reward. Properly taste despair!”

What?! The panting duo tensed up. They were completely exhausted after exerting their full strength. They could be easily annihilated by a counterattack.

However the falling Three Headed Dragon ignored the two, setting his sights at another direction.

Within the jaws sharp enough to chew the earth, generated flames several times hotter than before, the target the Demon King aimed at was ——

“Don’t, don’t tell me...!”

“He wants to shoot down Airborne Citadel ——!?”

—— Keep your eyes peeled, foolish challengers.

This flame was the strongest Gift Demon King Azi Dahaka inherited.

The strongest attack from the fire system, able to destroy one third of the world according to the legends.

**Notes and References:**

1. Zengun - To the whole army.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Part 1**

——Airborne Citadel, courtyard.

A violent impact shook the castle.

Taking shelter in the outskirts of the castle, Lily and the senior group children hugged one another for support. Lily who was trying her best to comfort the junior demi-human that were on the verge of tears, thought about the main force of "No Names" that were participating in the battle.

"Izayoi-sama.....Asuka-sama.....Yō-sama.....!"

Kuro Usagi onee-sama - she embraced the others while murmuring their names. No matter how strong the enemy was, they still resisted without a shred of fear. And then seized victory. No matter how severe the situation, they would surely obtain victory like they always did, they strongly believed so.

But the present condition was far more severe beyond their imagination.

Feeling an unknown phenomenon from the courtyard, Izayoi and Croix exchanged glances. Pushing the rim of his bowler hat, Croix's hair stood on ends from recalling the event from 200 years ago.

"Not good.....That fellow, already wants to end the contest.....!?"

"Don't tell me, is it the "Another Cosmology" of that lizard!?"

"No, that's another trump card he possesses! It's name is Khvarenah (Halo of the Supreme Ruler)! A gift that summons the power to pull the trigger to eschatology in the form of unimaginable sweltering heat."

Izayoi clenched his teeth in anxiety from Croix's words.

"He still had such a trump card.....!? He really is resourceful, that shitty lizard.....!!!"

"But this is the greatest chance! That can not be used simultaneously with "Avesta"! You must grab this chance and escape from here! I will save as many people as I can and run!"

But could they make it?

If it was him 200 years ago, then it would be possible to instantly transfer the whole castle, but because he lost spirit level in the outside world, carrying such a large object is now impossible.

Izayoi only grasped the situation partially, but he could tell that the threat felt from the outside was abnormal. Izayoi pressed his right and wanted to run over to repel the Three Headed Dragon's attack, but he was restrained by Croix.

Izayoi stared at Croix who caught his hand, full of hostility.

".....Let go, Shinigami. There's no time to take shelter right? If i don't do it, then who will"

"That's my line! If you fall then who can beat him!? Even if you blocked this with your power, the next one will still kill us!!"

"So what!!! If we don't survive this now it's game over!!! Isn't it!!?"

As if trying to convince each other, the two yelled at each other. However both had reasons not to compromise. Thinking that since it came to this, when they were about to use their last resort, Lapko IV appeared between them and stopped both of them.

"Both of you, stop it!"

*Pomf!* Lapko IV appeared along with a light tune.

She forced her way between them and pointed towards the cliff and announced.

"Last stage of the battle plan will begin soon! Both of you take your positions!"

"Oi you, can't you tell the situation!? Who will protect the castle if I don't!?"

"These girls will protect!!!"

Against those words with the resolve of death, Izayoi was unable to respond.

"She.....Koumei's daughter will protect the castle. You should accept it and commence the final preparations."

Lapko IV answered back in her small body.

The moment she touched Izayoi's head, his whole body suddenly emanated some light.

Looking back and forth at the glowing body with unknown reason, Izayoi was speechless as he held back his anger.

"Wh.....what did you.....!?"

"Sakamaki Izayoi. There's an anonymous message for you. 『Return one of the Sun authority stolen by "Ouroboros". Then we will be even. —— Do your job properly.』 - is the message"

Sun Authority snatched away by "Ouroboros". Sending someone to return it. There is just one person who would do something like that in these state of affairs.

The girl grasped Izayoi's hand tightly, used her palm-sized body to persuade him desperately.

"This is an unexpected development and aid, but with this, all conditions for victory are assembled. If we endure the next hit, the first and the final chance

will come. That's why, please believe in your comrade.....In Kasukabe Yō."

## Part 2

Kasukabe Yō who was fighting on the ground shuddered and lost her breath from the aurora released by the Three Headed Dragon who was falling to the ground.

"This is bad.....Lily and others who are on the castle will.....!"

She clasped the "Genome Tree" in hand and dashed towards the sky.

"Bloodstained Jack was nursed and took cover in the shade. She couldn't judge if he would live or not, but everything that could be done was done. All that's left was to pray. Now, she dashed towards the sky to save Lily and company. If jack was alright, he would've done the same. But losing one wing didn't mean that the three headed dragon lost his abilities, approaching him would be quickly retaliated.

(Leticia's side is beyond exhausted and only I can fight an aerial battle.....! I have no choice but to stop it.....!!!)

But, could she do it by herself?

Perhaps she could defend it with the most tenacious power displayed like last time by luck. But before, it ended with the disappearance of spirit level. Her

father just repaired it, but the possibility that it is irreparable this time could not be denied.

After all, there was still Izayoi in the Airborne Citadel.

Then leaving her post to fight without orders might cause danger to everyone.

Above all, if it was him, he'd laugh and eliminate it no matter the circumstances——

(——Wrong. It's not that. Wasn't that the reason of yesterday's crushing defeat.....!!!)

If it's Izayoi, he would shoulder all kinds of trouble.

The sense of dependence that existed in her heart, became the final wall between the relationship of him and the others. Because she had continuously entrusted him with all kinds of trouble, as a result, she unconsciously lost his reliance.

And so, Izayoi alone risked his life. He had no choice but to risk it.

Then the one who must change wasn't Izayoi. In fact, the one who should muster courage and change was —— not him, but Kasukabe Yō's side...

(Here.....If I don't risk my life here, I can never call him a comrade again.....!!!)

Grasping the "Genome Tree", Kasukabe Yō flew with max speed. Standing between the Airborne Citadel and Three Headed Dragon, she imitated the strongest beast from her knowledge.

Vinama Garuda held a powerful anti-god/anti-dragon gift but, it didn't reach the three headed dragon. In that case, what needed to be manifested now should be something else.

She heard that Azi Dakaha was not a divine spirit or a dragon species, but Eschatology instead. Then the thing he's trying to shoot, is probably the aurora that pulls the trigger to Eschatology.

Then, the necessary attribute is not anti-god or anti-dragon, it's anti-Eschatology spirit level.

The knowledge of the eudemon that was suitable to counter it from the book she once opened with an admirable and envious look.

No, the creation of the strongest species!!!

""Genome Tree".....Form "Quetzalcōātl"—!!!"

Instantly, a star shone from the palm of Kasukabe Yo.

"Genome Tree" limitlessly increased the spirit level and took a mass equivalent to a planet. Bishop's staff based on snake and rooster appeared, and on its tip was a dragon skull with opened fangs.

The origin of the spirit level that Kasukabe Yō called out, was one of the pillar from the gods that existed in B.C. 400. Incarnation of Venus that granted primal human flame of civilization and evolution.

Divine spirit holding the flames of origin - Quetzalcōātl.

If Azi Dakaha's flames call the end of the world, then these flames of origin are the opposite Gift.

The Three Headed Dragon compressed the spirit flames in his mouth while gazing at that flame in surprise.

"Useless! Just the original dragon won't stop my "Khvarenah"!!"

"I will show you!! The path I have taken won't lose to the likes of you!"

If the spirit level is the proof of one's way of life...

Then this spirit level, emitting the brilliance of a star, was the light of Kasukabe Yō's life.

With the godly staff that represented her whole existence in hand, she ignited the flames of origin with a cry.

"Fireeeeeeeeeeee——!!!"

Flames of origin showered down from the sky.

The spirit flames of ending shot out as if to pierce the sky.

Their clash dramatically changed the surrounding environment.

The cold dawn sky was dyed crimson from the heat and flared just like a setting sun. Atmospheric temperature rose so much that it felt like they were inside a volcano, and the sudden pressure change invoked four tornados. Just one of these aftershocks would be enough to annihilate the population if it appeared in human habitation.

The aura from their clash could even destroy the complementarity that balanced the world.

Only several seconds passed since the beginning of the clash and the scales of power already determined the winner from the two.

"——kh, ah.....!!!"

The flames of origin started to get pushed back by the spirit flames of the end. "Khvarenah" boasting the power of the strongest fire Gift, could mercilessly burn down even the abyss of Gehenna.

Just barely resisting it was already a miracle.

Kasukabe Yō turned her head and looked at the Airborne Citadel.

There were probably children from "No Names" still left in that castle. In addition to that, there were many injured and refugees taking shelter. Yō boread with everything she shouldered and revitalized herself.

Must not be defeated.

Must not lose, must not lose by any means.....!!!

She desperately endured the pain from both her burning hands and fought back. But with just that, the difference in ability wouldn't be complemented. Spiritualism was already at limit. There was nothing to increase it.

Regrettably, the firepower was still not enough.

The flames of fire dragons were just drops in an ocean. Leticia and Kouryuu's final trump cards must not be used yet. The war potentials to intervene in that battle was already exhausted.

(Damn.....Damn damn damn it, I won't be able to protect alone.....!!)

The whirlpool of aurora drew near. Bitterness rather than pain forced her on the verge of tears.

Even while mustering all her strength, victory couldn't be seen. The heavenly voice sneered at her as if saying that this was her limit. No matter how closely one imitated, a power of a human couldn't defeat a single god. To change this situation, one more person is needed.

If there was at least one —— just one more would do, a strong person of the highest class.....!

".....My my. I thought whether the daughter of Koumei stood a chance. As expected, I had to make an appearance huh?"

At the sudden voice from her back, Yō's heartbeat accelerated reflexively.

At first she thought it was Izayoi, but his aura and smell differed.

It was an aura of an even younger boy —— His Highness of "Ouroboros" said so with a sigh.

"This is a special service, Koumei's daughter. I will help you. This is a loan, so remember to return it afterwards."

The young boy with white hair and golden eyes giggled behind Yō's back.

His Highness extended both hands and grasped her shoulders, then announced while releasing sunlight from his whole body.

"——"Avatara" Activate. Surround the ten heavens and shine, "Another Cosmology".....!!!"

"Ugh.....!?"

Pain ran through her whole body. But along with it, some power ran through Kasukabe Yō's body faster than the speed of light.

Her consciousness almost flew from the torrent of life force that continuously changed as if resonating with the "Genome Tree". Every sense that Kasukabe Yō could perceive now was expanding with great momentum.

In her hands, ten universes existed respectively now.

Wisdom, that should be unattainable by the humanity.

Power, that should be unattainable by the humanity.

Starlight, that should be unattainable by the humanity.

Power transcending the existing rules of the universe poured into her body as if drowning her. That total amount of miraculous power was about to crush Kasukabe Yō's very soul. Hurts...It hurts - She seemed about to burst into tears any moment from feeling the extreme pain.

Before the omnipotent perfection, just a single girl's vessel wouldn't hold.

(Hurts, hurts, hurts, but——!!!)

——With this she might be able to protect.

Feeling a potential of victory, she roused her spirit. Even if she couldn't win, it's possible to shift the trajectory of the attack left or right from the Airborne Citadel.

Before long, the flames of origin changed the trajectory of the spirit flames of demise, it brushed past the Airborne Citadel and blew up beyond the horizon.

The Airborne Citadel strongly shook and jolted from the graze, but it didn't lose the floating power.

Just as relief filled her whole body — at that moment, she was assaulted with a hostility that gave her the chills.

".....You. You were able to defend yourself against my sure-kill  
"Khvarenah"?"

The voice rang as if from the depths of hell. It was decisively different from the carefree voice of Three Headed Dragon that they heard until now.

He was angered by Yō for wounding his pride.

That meant that she was recognized as an obstacle and a clear opponent.

(.....Bad. There's no escape.)

No, the Three Headed Dragon wouldn't let her get away. Demon Lord whose dignity was wounded after his strongest Gift was defended, wouldn't let his prey get away even if they run to the heaven and hell.

Cold sweat trickled down.

At the same time, Kasukabe Yō resolved herself to her fate.

The almighty feeling from a while ago was already gone. Probably because there was also no sign of His Highness. And, all the power that could be used was already depleted. There was also no spare energy to escape.

The Three Headed Dragon spread the remaining wing and attacked Yō with countless blades —— scattering fresh blood in the sky.

### **Part 3**

—— At this moment.

Wails from the children entered Jack's ears.

“Guh...!!!”

Lost consciousness awoke from sharp pain and nightmare. Blood flowed out without a trace of slowing down.

This body, had it already reached the limit? A fake smile floated at this thought.

Thinking back, it was a really embarrassing outcome. Clearly announcing 「I am “Jack the Ripper”.」, only to end up being seen through not long after the battle started.

There was only the most important riddle left now —— “Who is Jack?” this question alone, but with only this left, there was already insufficient spirit level to participate in the battle.

—— Yes. Jack was indeed a serial killer that murdered a lot of people, but he was not “Jack the Ripper” kind of specified individual.

In England and Ireland area, the name “Jack” was very common, just like Japan’s “something-taro”, a commonly used name.

“Jack o’ lantern” and “Jack the Ripper” type of names being similar was also because of this. Apart from these, some monster or murderer were also crowned with the name “Jack”.

Yes. This was the real identity of “Pumpkin the Clown”.

In the past, as a pumpkin clown, he had sworn for eternal salvation in the red light district. That was not a place like the high class brothel that provided meticulous care. It was such an underground district with a dreamy atmosphere, where for pleasure, people bought and discarded woman who sold their bodies for a living.

Serial killer “Jack the Ripper” appeared in that forked road to hell.

The reason the police could not find the specific criminal no matter how much investigation was done —— was because the person called “Jack the Ripper” did not exist at all, it was just that simple. That is to say the murders committed by “Jack the Ripper” were crimes committed by various different criminals.

And they were not adult males. Due to economic instability, poverty increased the number of prostitutes, and more unloved children were born.

The lower levels of the city was full of abandoned children seeking motherly love, their rampage triggered this incident. Murder was not done by an individual, but a serial prostitute murder committed by an unspecified number of criminals.

That was the true identity behind the monster “Jack the Ripper” which did not exist.

“...Guh...!!!”

Even now, closing his eyes would still cause him to recall some flashbacks.

Recalling the red light district then —— children who cried 『Can't we live in the world without love』 .

Recalling the wailing children, recalling the inquisitors sent by the church —— using the name “Jack the Ripper” for execution.

After recovering from his insanity, Jack swore to shoulder all the sins they committed. If anyone who robbed the future of children were to appear, next time for sure, he would fight for the children.

And now.

Far above in the sky, sounds of sobbing children due to insecurity reached him.

(Lily-san...and, children of “No Name”...!!!)

His body was gradually collapsing. After this body completely collapsed, this London City would also crumble to nothingness. But that was fine.

To activate his last resort, Jack held his Geass Roll tight.

(...If, it can't be cured...If this feeble life still has something to do!!!)

The most despicable means imaginable from the Taboo. To use the technique that might render the atonement of more than hundred years to zero, Jack poured strength into his arm.

If that could protect the future of the children.

If sacrificing this body to the last moment was for that wish!!!

(I...Falling to Demon Lord is fine —————!!!)

## Part 4

Like a red flash that pierced through all.

Murderous blades that closed in on Kasukabe Yō stopped after grazing her face, a shadow possessing burning pupils appeared before her.

Perhaps, that was actually the incarnation of heat and passion.

Not only the clothes, even hair and eyes emitted flame; side view of a sinister face that people might mistake as a citizen in hell.

Noticing that it was the Jack she was acquainted with, Kasukabe Yō called out his name with a trembling voice.

“Ja...Jack...?”

“...Kasukabe-san. Lastly, I have a request.”

Last request.

Yō understood that it was not a metaphor, but truly a last request.

Yō nodded shakily, then Jack spoke with a cheerful smile like normal.

“「Will o' Wisp」...Please take care of those children. They are all children that bear a sad past. So by your own hands, please guide them towards the righteous path.”

“Understood. I promise you.”

Towards the smiling face that encompassed all resolves, she returned with eyes filled with the same amount of resolve. Jack let out a light laughter in relief.

—— *Yahohohohoho!!!*

Letting out a laughter that prayed for the blessing of all children, Jack kicked the air with his flame springs. His posture was a red flash itself. Nothing else could describe it.

Jack’s air kick reached the maximum theoretical speed —— Sixth Cosmic Velocity, carved a deep wound in Azi Dahaka’s side abdomen.

“Geha!?”

The Three Headed Dragon let out the clearly anguished voice for the first time since the start of the battle. Although partly because of falling he couldn’t dodge, but that was not all.

Pure speed.

Undefendable sharpness.

“This speed, this slash! You...stepped into Demon Lord’s territory!?”

That was the worst possible deprivation imaginable.

Despite the lack of time to read the Geass Roll so it was unsure, but Jack definitely wrote a lot of rules that unconditionally granted Host advantages. People apart from poets doing this would create enormous logic error, it would only take minutes before the Game was forced to end.

Adding on, bloated spirit level would definitely self-destruct, even after death he would be punished by heaven. Guardian Saint Peter and Queen would not remain silent. This was equivalent to staining their trust to Jack who pleaded them that he would walk on the righteous path. They probably already listed Jack as a conquest target in the Heaven's army.

But putting these behind his mind, Jack jumped back and forth continuously.

“Divine punishment is already within expectation! This body originated from evil! Then annihilating “Absolute Evil” at the end of this evil path is just as I wish.”

—— “Countering great evil with evil”. Jack’s eyes showed such resolution.

Heaven’s army would not rush here now anyway. Then at the end, adding a moment of glory on his brutal life would also be good.

The Three Headed Dragon was slashed some two hundred plus times before landing.

Every bleeding, every clone released, was all peeling away at Three Headed Dragon’s armor.

Azi Dahaka immediately used his single wing to perform an all-direction annihilation after finally landing, but it was like slow motion to the current Jack.

The knife, that was supposed to easily shatter like glass, was reconstructed, became even stronger from the reconstruction of the game, and shaved the flesh unstoppably.

On the other hand, Jack's life was reaching its end.

“Ku, pain...!!!”

Sharp pain, like stakes directly hammered into the bones. Jack stopped in his track from the sudden pain, then started dashing as if to escape that pain.

“Not yet...let me, hold on a while longer...!!!”

There was no more bleeding. His body morphed into Astral, changing into an existence similar to light particles. Enormous energy was gained from this, now it was only left to exhaust it.

His agony was only an hallucination. The reason it continued to corrode his body, was because his painful memories from his own spirit were reflected on the surface of the Astral.

Watching him aching all over his body, the Three Headed Dragon raised his three heads and questioned.

“...”Countering great evil with evil”. That kind of thing, is it worth for you to throw yourself into hell?”

“Of course. That’s why I chose deprivation. Regardless of the price, I will not regret it.”

Wiping away fresh blood from the corner of his mouth, he howled to the Demon Lord.

Knowing all the consequences, he still chose to abandon everything.

Good deeds accumulated till this day. Accumulated trust. Countless smiles directed towards him.

Even if he could not be called an outstanding clown anymore, it was fine to close the curtain of his life as a serial killer. Because of such resolve, Jack turned into a Demon Lord.

“...Is that so?”

It was a voice that seemed to be considering Jack’s reply carefully. It was impossible to determine the feeling within it.

The Three Headed Dragon did not strike at Jack’s vulnerability, only watching quietly.

Then the words he spoke...carried a very tranquil tone.

“Very well. Then let me forgive you.”

“...What?”

He stopped his feet that were about to step out.

To the confused and surprised Jack, the Three Headed Dragon spoke seriously.

“As a member of Gods, I forgive you. If the punisher of evil is evil, there is only evil left after the deathmatch...That is too lacking in salvation. Hence, I, as an evil God approve of you. The path you walk contains a trace of justice. I will guarantee the brilliance of the blade that is stabbed at this "Absolute Evil".”

That voice despite being tranquil, was a supreme and powerful oracle.

—— “I, am the absolute evil. You, act out of justice.”

Cross it, across my corpse lays absolute justice.

No matter how much fresh blood stained your life. Even if you discarded all the glories till today.

I promise you this moment of justice, this evil God declares so.

“...Hah, haha, hahahahahahaha!!! This! An evil God will guarantee my justice? Uhu (Aah), this is great! It’s truer than anyone’s guarantee in the world...!!!”

How magnanimous was the oracle. How humongous was his caliber!

This was the caliber of the Demon Lord that carried humanity’s evil!!!

Flashing his canine tooth from a guffaw as if his morale was boosted. That laughter did not belong to Jack the Clown, but the laughter from him being his past self.

Severing his unforgivable past like someone else’s, Jack kept escaping by thinking “I(Ore) and I(Watashi) are different”, finally united himself as a whole now.

“Let me declare my title now! I am Demon Lord Pumpkin the Crown!  
Demon Lord Azi Dahaka’s heart...will be taken by Jack!”

The monster dashed like a red flash. Sprinting with the exaggerated speed of Sixth Cosmic Velocity.

The Three Headed Dragon waved his “Absolute Evil” flag, silently announcing death sentence.

“Avesta activate. Rival and return, “Another Cosmology”....!!!”

Against Jack that turned into the Astral body, the Three Headed Dragon also turned into an Astral body to counter.

In a battle of fifty:fifty, both sides crushed each other's body as well as they dug out flesh and blood. Although Jack regained immortality, his Game did not have much time left.

Running like the starlight, Jack maintained his speed as a light particle and dissipated. The outcome from the battle between the two, was only Three Headed Dragon.

Jack's spirit level already completely disappeared.

The proof of his path —— evil God's heart had been peeled open.

## **Part 5**

—— Airborne Citadel·Precipice.

“...Jack.”

That entire battle.

Izayoi witnessed it with eyes devoid of emotion.

A death fight that lasted less than a minute. The countless wounds left on the Three Headed Dragon by Jack, undoubtedly represented hope.

Despite this, Izayoi spoke out as if spitting blood.

"This.....This big Idiot"

Jack might have passed away satisfied, but Izayoi still wanted to reprimand him.

Not to blame him for sacrificing himself. but furious towards but furious towards Jack who had thrown away all his belongings and his whole life that he cherished until today. If he overcame this battle, Jack and No Name should be able to create more treasures and carve their paths.

Croix held his shoulder, shaking his head sideways persuasively.

“Izayoi-chan. I understand your feelings of scolding him. But now isn’t the time for that.”

“...I know.”

Swallowing all his bitterness, Izayoi turned to Lapko IV.

“Execute the final battle plan. This time, we must definitely finish off that Demon Lord.”

All Lapkos transmitted Izayoi’s speech to everyone.

Kouryuu, who had defeated the two headed dragon on the ground took out his Geass Roll, raised his head and watched the vaguely vanishing moon in the sky.

“...Already reached this stage? Then, I also have to resolve myself. ——  
Befall, Lunar Dragon!”

The fading moon’s existence continued to expand.

If it was not playing tricks on the eyes, the moon seemed to have been enlarged.

But that was no hallucination. The fading moon was literally falling towards the ground.

Kouryuu removed his eyepatch, releasing the artificial eye that was the medium of Moon Authority·New Moon.

The two moons that were divided by heaven and earth shook and resonated above the sea, revealing fangs towards each other. Kouryuu transformed from his human body into sea dragon which was his original form, the moon also imitated his appearance.

“Great Sage Who Devastate Seas” Kouryuu Demon Lord’s Game, made use of the moon’s phases to create super gravity, and temporarily transformed himself into a star spirit.

The moon in poems often came in pairs, to represent the sea surface of “Great Sage Who Devastate Seas” reflecting the moon.

The necessary condition to truly separate heaven and earth, was to crush the artificial eye of Kouryuu who governed the sea.

But it ended there. Kouryuu changed into a Celestial Dragon after merging with the Lunar Dragon. In this case Azi Dahaka must shatter Kouryuu in order to end the battle. What was left was only to kill or to be killed.

On the other hand, Leticia also activated her Host Master that was supposed to be preserved, raising the Sun Authority. She originally thought it was a power she would never use again, but against an opponent like Azi Dahaka, there was no reason to hide it.

Leticia raised her head and controlled her breathing, relieving her anxiety.

(This is my final move...It's all up to you, Master...!!!)

A twin headed snake coiled around the staff representing Asclepius.

At the same time it was raised, the horizon of dawn transmitted a roar that shook the atmosphere.

Anyone who experienced the battle of [Underwood] should know. The ruler of Vampires that once became a Demon Lord who killed her comrades and disrupted the peace with countless magic beasts

The Incarnation of Zodiac, possessing a humongous body that could even cover the sky.

Giant Golden Dragon —— Leticia Draculea's other form.

“\_\_\_\_\_

GYEEEEEEEEEYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa  
aaaaaaaaaaaaEEEEEYYYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA  
AAAAAAaaa ! ! ! ”

The giant dragon rushed from the horizon straight for Leticia.

The giant dragon that fused with her displayed her will in those eyes, staring at the Three Headed Dragon on the ground.

“Hng. Lunar Dragon and Solar Dragon. Is this your trump card?”

Not hiding the shining heart in his breast bone at all, the Three Headed Dragon calmly took his stance.

Despite one of his wings being destroyed, the heart that was his weakness dug open, the Demon Lord's spirit did not shake. It could be said to have raised even more.

People that could force him into this state could be countable with both hands.

The organization that fought him 200 years ago was just a thin line away. However the most crucial and strongest fighting strength, lost the human factor without him noticing.

Hence the former [No Name] and their alliance communities were forced to use a sealing method.

“...Such a short, but fierce battle. To decide the fate of Little Garden, nothing is better than this.”

Could they reach this Demon Lord’s heart?

Raising the 「Absolute Evil」 flag high and fought continuously in what seemed like eternity, would it be meaningful?

Now, the answer would be revealed.

“Now come, oh great heroes. And overcome me.... Over the corpse of mine, justice awaits you!!!”

He would not wait for his enemy. Obstacles still existed before his eyes.

Then crush the obstacles! Faster than the enemies!

Wings were irrelevant, the Three Headed Dragon spread his single wing and leapt. The aerial battle between him who was wingless and the two Celestial Dragons capable of flight, it was obvious which side had the advantage.

Therefore, the Three Headed Dragon would break his enemies' advantage head on.

The Three Headed Dragon fought like this regardless of time.

To those that declared to be heroes themselves, insisted that I was the final peak they arrived at.

Amongst them, there were also those who understood they couldn't win, but still fought for their loved ones.

Because she understood that simple honesty, that radiance —— his Creator, for the sake of humanity, shed her tears.

—— “Zoroastrianism” Evil God Mother, she spoke so.

“In this world, nothing more wonderful than humans exists.  
Hence I am sad. Because their perishment, is absolute.”

Yes. Perishment.

It would lead to perish.

Humanity would perish regardless of their struggles.

Although “Zoroastrianism” had the motto of praising the good and punishing the evil, that was only depicted from the viewpoint of gods. Her viewpoint

from a strength far surpassing the structure of “Zoroastrianism”, seen through all of humanity’s ending.

That’s why she wept.

Because she deeply loved those humans that impeached her, she wept.

Wishing to wipe away her tears as much as possible, the Three Headed Dragon resolved to become the oldest Demon Lord —— an existence referred to as “Last Embryo”.

Clarifying the reason for humanity’s perishment, refining it, then creating their future from their victory.

Carrying the most sinful flag “Absolute Evil”, serving her until the end of the world.

After speaking out all his plans, Three Headed Dragon held her and swore.

—— The sins that you shouldered, please let us shoulder it together.

And now, the contract could finally be completed.

(I will not compromise the result. As the Final Trial of Humanity, I will crush you...!!! )

As a representative of the trial, showing mercy would be meaningless. Hence he used all his power to destroy the challengers.

The Three Headed Dragon roared towards the two Celestial Dragons.

“\_\_\_\_\_

GYEEEEEEEEEYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaaaaaaaa  
aaaaaaaaEEEEEYEEEEEYAAAKAAAAAAAaaaaaaa  
AAAAAAAaaa ! ! ! ”

The three super dragons shook heaven and earth. The Three Headed Dragon took on Lunar Dragon's assault squarely, immediately using his trump card.

“Avesta activate. Dualism construction, Another Cosmology...!!!”

The opponent's spirit level was added onto his own body. With this power, the numerous advantages were ineffective against the Three Headed Dragon. It was impossible to beat this power without sharing the same Cosmology as the Three Headed Dragon.

But, the Three Headed Dragon immediately realized a change.

(What happened...Only Lunar Dragon's spirit level was added...!?)

Leticia and the vampires came from the far future, a race born in the timeline outside the boundary of possibilities. A primate species of human's next generation.

And the gigantic Solar Dragon, was a personification of human civilization's remnant — Flying in orbit of the Sun, an incarnation of a satellite. The

giant dragon that was created from the legacy of humanity as the strongest species, an existence that encompassed the Cosmology of humanity.

But the chance provided by this trickery was only a moment.

Three Headed Dragon immediately discerned the truth from his enormous knowledge.

“Legacy created by humans! Then I will fight it with “Khvarenah”!!!”

The Three Headed Dragon concentrated his internal heat in his mouth while descending.

At this moment, the enemy’s movement came to a complete halt.

Leticia aimed for this moment, played her final card.

“Gift of Ophiuchus...A single moment is fine, please grant me the power to restrain him...!!!”

A Giant Golden Dragon compressed its massive body, changed into chains that bound the dragon and wound around him. The gigantic mass was retained in the chain, even the Three Headed Dragon was restrained.

“Petty tricks...!”

“Right now! Ignore me and attack, Kuro Usagi!!!”

Following the voice of Leticia, a strong divine energy was released from the group of fire dragons. Sensing that this Divinity was the same one he felt at the start, the Three Headed Dragon revealed his fangs and mumbled.

“Indra...No, wrong. Moon Rabbit survivor!!”

Originally a race exterminated 200 years ago. And in her hands held the Victory Spear.

He remembered the shape of that spear.

But the Three Headed Dragon would not be astonished by this fact. Watching Kuro Usagi taking a stance with that spear, he raged.

(How foolish! Even now you try to use the authority of Universal Truth(Brahma)! Did they not understand Avesta's ability!?)

The Indian Gods - The Sun Trinity Mystical God held the the spear of absolute hit and absolute victory. That was the authority of “Destined Victory” the Gods reached after manipulating the truth of the Universe, a type of ‘Another Cosmology’.

Once that was used, regardless of target, Avesta would automatically oppose and neutralize it.

The after-wave from doing so would cause the two Celestial Dragons to lose their lives. The collapsed London City would be completely obliterated. In

the final moment of the finale they were relying on that stuff? The Three Headed Dragon raged.

Kuro Usagi and her spear released divine energy, aimed at the target while discharging lightning.

“My race’s hatred! Be avenged right here!”



The spear containing tens of thousands of wills, locked onto the Three Headed Dragon's heart.

Foolish, as the Three Headed Dragon sighed and used his Avesta ——

“\_\_\_\_\_!?”

Avesta, did not activate.

That's right, the Three Headed Dragon only focused on the shape of the spear, and miscalculated in the crucial point.

The Trinity Mystical God that converted to buddhism renamed to “Brahma”.

And created the dual faith concept of Indra and Brahma.

The replica born from the dual faith concept of Indra and Brahma, was of course not ‘Another Cosmology’. In other words, Indra's Gift resided in this spear.

(That's right! This spear is born from the Gift of my main God! There is only one meaning. Zoroastrianism's cosmology is also resided in this spear!!)

200 years ago —— The regrets of those comrades who sacrificed their lives to let Kuro Usagi, known as God's child, escape.

For the sake of pain from the past, and the lives of comrades that were lost today,

Kuro Usagi exhausted her full strength to attack.

“Pierce him —— Brahmastra Replica ——!!!”

With speed similar to astral —— Sixth Cosmic Velocity, the spear of absolute victory was thrown. Azi Dahaka’s whole body shivered from the never seen before vigor.

The spear raced towards the heart in a straight line, reaching the heart without a moment's delay.

No escape, defeat. Only such philosophy remained in his heart.

But Three Headed Dragon, the strongest Demon Lord, swept everything away with his nobleness.

“Don’t underestimate Demon Lord ——Underestimate 「Absolute Evil」 !!!”

He torn off the seal that carried the mass of a star with brute force.

Leticia raised an unrecognizable cry and dissipated, collapsing on the ground in her human form.

The spear with Sixth Cosmic Velocity pressed close.

Azi Dahaka used his experience from the previous battle as foundation, channeling into Astral form by himself.

—— Who could believe it?

In that instant of a moment, the Three Headed Dragon completed two evolutions.

Arm strength to shatter the stars, and a movement method that surpassed starlight.

The two Gifts human wisdom could not touch, he managed to bring it out with just his spirit.

If there existed someone who could predict such a situation.

“—— Ah ah. I knew it, you will dodge it.”

There was only one. One that envied the existence known as Demon Lords and firmly believed in the nobleness they possess.

## Epilogue

The Illusion City of London was destroyed. Stone streets and spires disappeared without a trace as if everything until now was just an illusion.

However, the rivers of blood and mountains of corpses were screaming that the battle was real. The battle continued for no longer than an hour. Giants from 「Ouroboros」 attacked just yesterday. That was followed by the resurrection of the three headed dragon as well as Maxwell's attack and counterattack. Kouen City that was turned to ruins became silent just like 2 days ago. There were no traces left of it, almost as if a war ravaged it years ago . If there was anything fortunate in this, that was just the fact that the dead fire dragons were resting on their homeland.

“.....”

Silence fell. Everyone was trembling while looking at the scenery before them.

The spear thrown at the heart of the three headed dragon by Kuro Usagi certainly pierced through him. And there was a figure of Sakamaki Izayoi, the boy who was tightly holding the spear.

What did this mean?

What happened at the moment of attack?

Looking at the spear that deeply pierced through his heart, the three headed dragon emotionally nodded.

“.....Hm.”

Each of the three heads were looking at different things.

At the spear that pierced through him, at wounded hosts, and at Sakamaki Izayoi who was there with a spear in hand.

The three headed dragon narrowed his ruby eyes and smiled as if he was fooled and nodded.

“....It's my loss. I never thought... I never thought that there would ever appear a fool who would decide to stop a spear, flying at 6th cosmic velocity!!!”

It was hard to believe that such smooth and bright smile was coming from a monster.

Certainly. You could only think about it.

The spear thrown by Kuro Usagi turned into a beam of light and rushed towards the heart of the three headed dragon. But according to the plan of hosts, it will lose against the ambitions of the three headed dragon.

To catch the dragon by surprise, there was the need for an even more reckless move.

『To catch the divine spear that had activated divinity and pierce the dragon with it when he lowers his guard.』

It's easy to say, but to bet on this move, the one who throws and the one who catches it must have unwavering will and courage.

Kuro Usagi's throw could easily kill Sakamaki Izayoi.

But to this, she answered with a throw that did not even contain a bit of hesitation.

And if Izayoi was planning to catch it, he must put his life on the line. A perfect surprise attack, it was something impossible to do unless both of them completely believed in each other.

“....”

Izayoi clenched his teeth.

The dragon that was about to fall noticed, and the hand which was holding the spear that pierced through his heart, trembled. With his last breath, the dragon tightly clenched the hand of the hero that defeated him, as if giving his last blessings and said:

“.....There is nothing to be ashamed of. If you do not know, then be sure to remember it. This trembling is called – Fear.”

“N-No!!!”

“Yes. And, don't forget. Even when trembling with fear, you took a step forward. That is courage.”

“No!” He violently shook his head as if lamenting.

But, the three headed dragon flared and turned to ashes without hearing his words till the end.

White body, three heads, ruby eyes. This body that the whole world feared, flared up just like the flames of the last firework and disappeared.

The crimson flag of 「Absolute Evil」 changed it's emblem into an emblem of the great alliance of 「Arcadia」 , an emblem which depicted a girl on a hill – Symbolizing freedom. Emblem of the original flag that acted as a seal.

And then, a great roar that sounded like a volcanic eruption was heard.

Heroic voices, raised so high, as if the Gods and Buddhas weren't the only ones capable of shaking the Heavens and Earth.

Some were honestly happy about the fact that they survived.

Some cried seeing their comrades alive.

Some looked at the sky and talked about the future.

Among the myriad screams, Sakamaki Izayoi cried on the back of Lunar Dragon.

“No... No, Azi Dakaha!!!”

At the peak of joyful voices of the hosts who celebrated victory, Izayoi let out a regrettable scream and cried.

Human, who knew the meaning of these tears, the only human who knew what happened at the moment of attack.

Lunar Dragon who was lending his back – Kouryuu, still being in the form of a dragon saw everything with his own eyes, and said with a soft voice.

“....Even so, you won. That is already undeniable.”

With the skillful movements of manes, Kouryuu comforted Izayoi who was tightly holding the flag of freedom to his chest..

Among the victorious voices of excited people, only he knew the reason behind Izayoi’s tears..

Sakamaki Izayoi tasted a crushing defeat.



## **Afterwords**

Many thanks to all who have gotten themselves a copy of the modern comical fiction based on the hot-blooded imaginations of a different world—*<Mondaiji-Tachi ga Isekai kara kuru Soudesu yo?>*.

I would like to offer my thanks here to all who have helped me in completing this volume within the tight schedule. A very big thank you for you guys! Indeed, I would not be able to meet the deadlines otherwise!

Next, we are just a volume away from the end of the first arc. The next volume will be the conclusion to the long-running Alliance Flag arc and the Azi Dahaka arc with an open air onsen Game!

The main stage will be at the male's bath!!!

I really am Taro Tatsunoko who's really the idea some serious thought. But I've not been able to get into the bath house. No, it's not me, I meant the main characters. No, wait, it's also possible to sneak into that Stage from the backstage right?

Anyways, the next volume will be the conclusion of the story. It is estimated to be released in stores by winter, so please continue to take care of the problem children then.

Taro Tatsunoko.